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PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: EVALUATION

In-depth evaluation of the Department of Public Information

Note by the Secretary-General

In conformity with paragraph 5 (e) (i) of General Assembly resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the attached report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services entitled "In-depth evaluation of the Department of Public Information". The Secretary-General concurs with the recommendations in the report.

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ANNEX

[18 March 1996]

In-depth evaluation of the Department of Public Information

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

SUMMARY

The Committee for Programme and Coordination, at its thirty-fourth session, recommended that an in-depth evaluation of the Department of Public Information be prepared for its consideration in 1996.

The present report contains findings and recommendations on: (a) the approach of the Department to implementing mandates; (b) the adequacy of the Department's services to redisseminators, the general public and substantive departments; and (c) the effectiveness of programme implementation, in particular in meeting the needs of target audiences and in disseminating information.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee for Programme and Coordination, at its thirty-fourth session, recommended that an in-depth evaluation of the Department of Public Information be prepared for its consideration in 1996. 1/

2. The Department of Public Information, as the focal point of the information activities of the Organization, covers the entire range of issues currently before the United Nations. The in-depth evaluation reviewed all the programmes of the Department and analysed a large sample of its information products. In addition, a management letter was transmitted from the Office of Internal Oversight Services to the Department giving findings and recommendations on managerial issues and covering such topics as production and distribution of print materials, multiplier effects, increased efficiency in the use of equipment, and legal and administrative support.

3. The following categories of information were reviewed in the conduct of the in-depth evaluation: (a) information in the public domain (United Nations reports and documents, and studies by government agencies, non-governmental organizations and individual experts); (b) information from internal sources (the Department's internal evaluation reports, internal audit reports, reports of consultants, programme monitoring reports, and internal working documents); (c) the views of Governments, as contained in the statements of government representatives at the seventeenth session of the Committee on Information; (d) structured interviews and consultations with accredited press correspondents and news agencies, non-governmental organization representatives and staff of the Department of Public Information, and other departments of the Secretariat, and of the agencies of the United Nations system.

4. There have been reform efforts made in the Department over the past two years. The general intentions have been to extend the Department's reach to key audiences with a multiplier effect; forge partnerships with media organizations; harness new technologies; and promote a higher level of departmental and inter-agency cooperation. At the same time, there has been better utilization of advanced information technologies for the production and delivery of public information programmes; closer professional cooperation with both substantive departments and other members of the United Nations system, in particular in coordination of public information work relating to major conferences and communications; and a series of management initiatives that have made the Department a more streamlined and integrated operation.

II. FUNDAMENTALS

A. Mandates

5. The basic mandate of the Department of Public Information is set out in General Assembly resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946: "to promote to the greatest possible extent an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations among the peoples of the world. To this end the Department should primarily assist and rely upon cooperation of the established

governmental and non-governmental agencies of information to provide the public with information about the United Nations. The Department of Public Information should not engage in 'propaganda'. It should on its own initiative engage in positive informational activities that will supplement the services of existing agencies of information to the extent that these are insufficient to realize the purpose set forth above".

6. In resolution 50/31 B of 6 December 1995, the General Assembly reaffirmed that the Secretary-General should ensure that the activities of the Department are strengthened and improved, keeping in view the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the priority areas defined by the General Assembly and the recommendations of the Committee on Information. These priority areas and recommendations are highlighted at every General Assembly session in the annual resolution on United Nations public information policies and activities. In addition to this annual resolution, a number of resolutions adopted by the Assembly imply or explicitly request the participation of the Department in implementing public information activities. While a number of mandates provide one-time tasks to the Department, others are recurrent, with, over time, a sizeable cumulative effect. For example, about one third of the mandates adopted at the forty-fourth session, while not restated since in new resolutions, are still current. The total number of conferences and observances that needed to be publicized in 1990 was 57 and in 1995, 65.

7. The staff of the Department commented that the multiplicity of specific mandates presented several difficulties. The activities of the Organization do not generate each year the same volume and type of information in every substantive area; public information strategies and techniques have to be adjusted accordingly. The proportion of resolutions containing formulations that limit this needed flexibility has declined in recent years but is still very high; approximately two thirds of the requests for public information services in resolutions adopted at the forty-fourth session were for specific information services or products, and this proportion was still more than half of the resolutions adopted at the forty-ninth session. Another difficulty is that a large number of these topics are not of the highest interest to news organizations. Effective promotion cannot be accomplished in each and every case; resources are limited and it is impossible to obtain media attention for all issues for which it is requested.

B. Themes, priorities and managerial discretion

8. In the 1994 report of the Secretary-General on questions relating to information (A/49/385, paras. 6-7), it was stated that, in order to sharpen the focus of the Department's activities mandated under paragraph 2 (a) of General Assembly resolution 48/44 B of 10 December 1993, the following thematically integrated priority areas were being pursued:

(a) Sustainable economic and social development in the overall context of "an agenda for development", with stress on the promotion and interrelation of issues raised in connection with major United Nations conferences;

(b) Peacemaking, peace-keeping and peace-building in pursuit of the Organization's new responsibilities;

(c) Human rights and humanitarian relief activities, highlighting the emerging role of the Organization.

9. During the biennium 1994-1995, Department strategies and products linked a number of issues. For example, the public information strategy for the International Conference on Population and Development, held at Cairo, in September 1994, the World Summit for Social Development, held at Copenhagen in March 1995, and the Fourth World Conference on Women, held at Beijing in September 1995, emphasized their interrelatedness and encouraged journalists to view them as a continuum. Regarding the balance between the three major themes defined above, the most recent programme performance report available, for the biennium 1992-1993, shows that two thirds of the outputs and work months of units in promotional services, where activities are programmed by thematic areas, were in the area of the first theme, sustainable economic and social development. It should be noted that because of the Department's efforts to reflect linkages of issues, it is often difficult to represent output under only one priority area. This happens when a thematic issue and population group form the core of focus, such as human rights and women, the rights of the child, indigenous people and employment. Other activities of the Department, such as most radio and television programmes, were not programmed by thematic areas. An analysis of two core radio and television programmes shows that two thirds of the primary topics covered were also in the area of sustainable economic and social development. Here again, however, many of these programmes also cover human rights and humanitarian issues, or aspects of peace-keeping or peace-building.

10. In 1993, at the fifteenth session of the Committee on Information, a number of speakers stressed that the Department of Public Information needed to prioritize its information activities and to dispense with outdated mandates. In the opinion of many delegations, senior staff should have the budgetary flexibility to move resources as needed to emerging areas of importance. Several delegations indicated their belief that the Committee on Information must strive to tackle new areas of interest in its resolutions, in order to keep the Department's priorities current and focused. 2/ According to paragraph 2 (b) of General Assembly resolution 48/44 B, the Department is expected to provide the necessary level of information support for the activities of the United Nations in situations requiring immediate and special response. By that paragraph, the Assembly gives the Department greater flexibility to shift resources in consultation with the Bureau of the Committee. Since the forty-eighth session, this discretion has been used mostly for activities organized around conferences and special events or to react to misperceptions of the work of the Organization. Only a few resolutions contain formulations that enable the Department to make the necessary decisions in the face of changing circumstances. For example, in resolution 48/158 C of 20 December 1993, on the question of Palestine, the Assembly requested the Department to continue, with the necessary flexibility as may be required by developments affecting the question of Palestine, its special information programme.

11. The organizational structure of the Department is less rigid than it used to be, and gives management more flexibility in utilizing the resources at its disposal. However, the definition, in 1994, of the three thematically integrated priority areas referred to in paragraph 8 above has not resulted as yet in adjustments in the work of all services.

12. The difficulty of implementing numerous mandated activities is not entirely resolved by the broad priority areas approach; there are still, for example, a large number of observances to publicize. The Joint Inspection Unit had noted that the "net effect on the public of the proliferation of United Nations observances is one of saturation. Consequently they run counter to the desired goal of mobilizing opinion" (A/44/329, annex, para. 108). The Secretariat commented that "it should be recalled that the designation of such observances is determined by various intergovernmental legislative bodies, which, in many cases, wish to attract the attention of specialized sectors of the media, of national legislative organs, non-governmental organizations and the public" (A/44/329/Add.1, para. 10). Every year, the list of observances provided to United Nations information centres is a major element in their work programme. During the biennium 1992-1993, 12 observances were the subject of wide publicity by the centres. However, publicity is limited for other observances to the issuance of a press release, or the organization of a brief ceremony, which is generally insufficient to convey to the public the real significance of the issues involved. Some observances or themes carry more relevance and command greater public interest in a given country. In 1995, at Headquarters, special events were scheduled - in collaboration with the programmes and agencies of the United Nations system - for 22 of the 65 conferences and observances to be publicized that year.

C. Interest and awareness of the public

13. In 1993, the General Assembly, in paragraph 2 (c) of its resolution 48/44 B, called upon the Secretary-General to ensure that the Department continued its efforts at promoting an informed understanding of the work and purposes of the United Nations system among the peoples of the world and at strengthening the positive image of the system as a whole.

14. The surveys of public opinion commissioned by the Department in 27 countries worldwide between 1989 and 1993 show that the general public is interested in a wide array of United Nations activities. In fact, the interest in DPI publications giving basic information on the different activities of the United Nations is such that the Department cannot produce the quantities needed to fulfil requests transmitted by United Nations information centres. To meet such demand, United Nations in Brief, for example, has been redesigned to permit, within available budgets, internal printing in greater numbers in all six languages. Also, in the light of budgetary constraints, the Department is now disseminating more of its products through electronic information networks. The usefulness of DPI material is limited by the lack of material in local languages. The Department has encouraged local production of material; when resources are available, newsletters and publications are produced locally. The Department is aware of the problem and has endeavoured to allocate funds for this purpose. The problem of language is more acute when it comes to other

redisseminating efforts, such as the showing of video programmes on television and in schools.

15. Booklets produced to introduce the United Nations to the general public and material placed on electronic networks still tend to focus on administrative and organizational questions. There is not always much difference between DPI materials ostensibly targeting Governments, academics and the public; but there is intent by DPI management to shift to a greater emphasis on subjects of interest to the general public. Simple procedures to enhance product identity are not applied consistently; with the multiplication of new logos, a number of DPI products may not necessarily be associated with the United Nations. In 1995, the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information stated that public interest in the United Nations was at an all-time high - but the message of the Organization must compete for the public's attention as never before. The task was to find ways to sharpen the focus on current issues and reach the widest possible audience.

Recommendation 1, Overall strategy of the Department of Public Information. In keeping with its basic mandate, resolution 13 (I) of 13 February 1946, the primary activity of the Department should be to assist and rely upon established agencies of information to provide the public with information about the United Nations; the Department should engage in activities that will supplement the services of existing agencies of information to the extent that these are insufficient to provide adequate information. The role of the Department should be primarily to provide services useful to agencies of information and other redisseminators such as non-governmental organizations and educational institutions. Recommendations 2, 4-7, 9-13, 15 and 16 below apply this principle to specific services and functions. [EV/96/02/1] 3/

Recommendation 2, Annual priorities.

A. The Department of Public Information should submit to the Committee on Information, within the framework of the approved medium-term plan and programme budget, a priority programme for the coming calendar year. The priority programme should focus on a limited set of specific topics and issues with linkages between some topics and issues. The priority programme should be implemented by an information strategy that draws on resources in all the sections of the Department.

B. For other topics and issues, the Department should restrict its activities to acting as a focal point and catalyst by encouraging public and private information agencies, networks of specialized non-governmental organizations, and educational institutions to carry out appropriate activities. The Department should provide the necessary guidance and overall coordination, and facilitate the transmission of existing information materials to and among those carrying out the activities. [EV/96/02/2] 3/

D. Coverage by the media

16. In recent years, the interest of the media in the United Nations has increased significantly. Wire service stories with references to the United Nations filed in the NEXIS database were 1.7 per cent of all stories in 1984, 3 per cent in 1988 and 5.1 per cent in 1994. 4/ An analysis of a sample of wire service stories mentioning the United Nations filed in 1994 shows that nearly 60 per cent of these stories cover the main crises of the period - peace-keeping operations, sanctions and refugee situations; themes such as development or environment make up respectively 4.7 and 0.9 per cent of the stories. In October 1994, in his statement to the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly, the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information stated that since international media coverage of the United Nations focuses almost exclusively on peace-keeping, significant portions of cur audiences have come to believe that development is not a priority United Nations activity. In 1994-1995, the Department focused its resources on a cycle of international conferences placed under the broad theme of economic and social development. An analysis of a sample of all wire service stories filed in NEXIS between January 1993 and May 1995 shows that stories with at least one reference to social development doubled during the period; text analysis of a sample of stories revealed that, in those stories, the increase in substantive coverage of United Nations activities was even more significant.

17. Regarding the follow-up to the conferences, the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (CONGO) observed that media coverage of summits makes an important contribution, but is generally limited in time; non-governmental organizations reach out to an immense diversity of constituencies in ways that are often more durable and meaningful than those of the mass media. Press correspondents interviewed commented that it was easier for them to cover issues presented from a newsworthy perspective and that, although the Department of Public Information has made considerable efforts to draw attention to economic and social development, United Nations press conferences still tend to be "inst_tutional". Informal meetings with personalities organized at the right moment and the personal accounts of officials back from the field can do more for the coverage of "soft" issues. The Department intends to organize more of such meetings.

E. Countering criticism and publicizing newsworthy developments

18. In 1993, the Committee for Programme and Coordination recommended that the Secretariat respond more effectively and expeditiously to the criticism of the United Nations in the media. 5/ The staff of the Guided Tours and Public Inquiries Units of the Public Services Section are required to be briefed on newsworthy developments and current news stories that might generate negative images and to respond immediately with accurate and appropriate information. However, there are no standard procedures for admitting to justified criticism or for answering inaccuracies or unfair comments and there are numerous examples where misrepresentations of the role of the United Nations did not elicit any reaction. Organized campaigns to counter negative attitudes regarding a United Nations activity have rarely been launched and sustained. In 1995, the

Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information issued a directive on the matter to heads of information offices away from Headquarters. It was stated in the directive that, in recent months, the level and frequency of criticism of the United Nations, as reflected in the press clippings sent by United Nations information centres to Headquarters, has been on the rise; much of the criticism revealed limited and possibly inaccurate understanding of the United Nations. The directive stressed that it was necessary to react promptly, within a day or two after the offending article appeared, and to have a letter published even if no guidance was received from Headquarters. United Nations information centre directors interviewed stated that this directive helped them considerably. A similar written directive at Headquarters is needed. In the last quarter of 1995, the Department established at Headquarters a core group of staff to focus on the production of fact-sheets containing up-to-date figures to help the press and the public put the activities of the United Nations and the associated costs into a realistic perspective. This effort is now being institutionalized within the Promotion and Public Services Division to provide the Organization with a rapid response capacity to correct misinformation published in the media.

19. The Office of the Spokesperson has encouraged departments, as well as United Nations information centre directors, to draw the attention of the Office to issues and events where there is potential for misperception or misrepresentation of the role of the United Nations. When the point of view of the United Nations is not presented early enough, if possible before the press has covered the story, misrepresentations can rarely be corrected.

20. The Secretary-General has expressed disappointment that United Nations success stories do not generate more coverage in the media. Senior officials have not developed the habit of alerting the Office of the Spokesperson and the Department of Public Information to newsworthy developments in their areas of responsibility as well as developments that demonstrate the capabilities and accomplishments of the United Nations. A unified approach to communicating the messages of success through different channels of information has not been implemented. Regular meetings are needed between the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information and the Office of the Spokesperson to review new developments and to decide on appropriate action by the Department; there is no mechanism for conveying systematically, and in a timely manner, relevant information from substantive departments to the Department of Public Information.

Recommendation 3. Countering criticism and publicizing newsworthy developments. A policy directive should be issued before the end of 1996 requiring the heads of all departments and offices to draw the attention of the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information to:

(a) Newsworthy developments in their areas of responsibility, and newsworthy demonstrations of the capabilities and accomplishments of the United Nations;

(b) Misperceptions or misrepresentations of the role of the United Nations.

The policy should also provide guidance to senior officials on the nature of what is regarded as newsworthy, and on the immediate actions they should take to counter misperceptions or misrepresentations. [EV/96/02/3] 3/

F. Targeting audiences

21. The General Assembly, in its resolution 49/38 B of 9 December 1995, requested the management of the Department of Public Information to review its publications and proposals for publications to ensure that all publications fulfil an identifiable need, that they do not duplicate other publications inside or outside the United Nations system and that they are produced in a cost-effective manner. Although the United Nations message should ultimately reach the public as its audience, the Department must produce materials for the media and other redisseminators, including non-governmental organizations and academic institutions. Also, such audiences as schools, academic institutions and non-governmental and other organizations are reached through the organization of model United Nations programmes in cooperation with educational institutions, and the operation of a speakers' bureau (see para. 58 below). To avoid duplication in production within the United Nations system, the Department has regular as well as ad hoc contact with Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) partners regarding public information work for all major United Nations activities and events.

1. Print materials

22. In recent years, some print materials have been produced with specific target audiences in mind such as specialized segments of the press. In 1994-1995, for the promotion of major conferences, the Information and Planning Service targeted redisseminators, mostly the press, and designed print products to suit the needs of journalists. However, there is no established system to determine the needs of the target audience to be satisfied by a DPI product. There is no adequate analysis of feedback on DPI products, avenues for receiving feedback are not fostered and objective feedback is far from abundant. For the biennium 1996-1997, the Department proposes establishing feedback mechanisms to gauge the usefulness of its information materials and services to the targeted audiences. 6/

23. In 1995, in addition to the work of the Programme Evaluation and Committee Liaison Unit, responsible for the evaluation function within the Department, a few systematic analyses of user needs and related issues were undertaken by several other units. These studies were not strongly coordinated and their usefulness was uneven. The Unit was not in a position to increase its production of evaluation studies on major outputs and activities of the Department and to provide necessary guidance to assessment activities in other units.

24. The Department reviews proposals for publications, paying attention to the extent to which the information to be provided by such publications might already be available elsewhere. However, the cross-checking for product duplication is handled by ad hoc methods such as telephoning colleagues in

substantive departments and throughout the United Nations system. Sometimes, information from other parties is not received in a timely manner. At the 1995 meeting of JUNIC, it was noted that the information exchange between JUNIC members did not fulfil the purpose of the exercise, because respondents tended to report on already completed activities rather than provide information in advance of upcoming projects (ACC/1995/15, para. 8). Inter-agency task forces set up to coordinate public information work for major conferences are seen as a useful mechanism. At its 1995 meeting, JUNIC agreed that joint participation in the World Summit for Social Development should serve as an example of successful inter-agency cooperation (ibid., para. 17). No comprehensive tracking method is applied in monitoring the public information production of other international organizations. The same difficulties are experienced concerning non-print products. In relation to the review requested by the General Assembly in resolution 49/38 B, in its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) found that "further analysis is needed to ascertain to what extent a number of the publications could be merged and/or produced more economically by avoiding redundant or duplicative material". 7/

Recommendation 4. Target audience needs for DPI print or electronic materials.

A. Redisseminators, who are either the target audience itself or the channel for reaching the target audience, should be the primary source of assessments of needs and demand. The production of all print or electronic materials, recurrent and non-recurrent, should be planned with the public information needs of specific target audiences in mind. These needs should be taken into account in determining the format and content of the material, and the method, scope and timing of its dissemination.

B. Materials produced by specialized agencies, Governments, non-governmental organizations and similar publishing centres that can assist the Department in fulfilling its mandates should be utilized and promoted by the Department.

C. Only print or electronic material, the effective dissemination of which can be adequately funded, should be produced. [EV/96/02/4] 3/

2. Audiovisual materials

25. Within existing resources, more comprehensive consultations and meetings are needed with broadcasters, or with their regional associations, to ascertain their needs in terms of type of programming, mode of transmission and target audience. In recent years, the production of videos has focused on shorter or low-cost programmes aimed at the general public, such as the news magazine "United Nations in Action", which is appreciated by viewers and broadcasters. Other attempts to match user needs are made by, for example, packaging film and video footage of various lengths to suit different broadcasters' needs and preparing clips to be used by broadcasters in their own news broadcasts. Selections of unedited footage illustrating a United Nations issue provided prior to the opening of a major international conference fall into that

category; "United Nations in Action" and the daily news highlights are also used in that manner.

26. Audiences reached worldwide by radio are diverse, in terms of demographics and interests. A number of United Nations radio programmes are well received by segments of the public, for example, the regular programme for women or a few special series. The Department has made efforts to improve the quality of programming, but a meaningful diversification of Headquarters programmes cannot be achieved without changing methods of production and of dissemination, by, for example, introducing live programming and partnerships with development agencies. In response to a question by the Central Evaluation Unit, the Department observed that the limitation of resources and of immediately accessible audio material at Headquarters, and of the number of products that could be aired free of charge by sponsoring broadcasting organizations, were all inhibiting factors. In general, the present radio programming is not sufficiently diversified so that it does not target specific groups; programmes of the regional units have only limited original programming. A number of United Nations information centres assist local radio broadcasters in the production of programmes and participate in local radio programmes. During a recent quarter, one centre participated in or prepared about 20 radio programmes. Another centre provided support to a local university that prepares television programmes and a weekly radio programme of 15 minutes focusing on the activities of the United Nations in the country. Briefings to newly appointed centre directors include guidance on the development of local radio programmes, using United Nations Radio material as well as local resources. However, collaboration between United Nations information centres and the Radio Section needs to be further strengthened. A number of centre directors interviewed stated that they lack the resources to be active in this way, and that they do not feel encouraged to participate in such shared activities. There is a need for clarification of policy on the promotion of local radio broadcasts on the United Nations and on the appropriateness of the involvement of United Nations information centres in local productions, taking into account the view that consistent jurisdiction over the origination and control of United Nations Radio programming and broadcasting should be maintained. There is also a need to provide a selected number of centres with portable recording and radio feed equipment that can help them relay radio news to local broadcasters as well as transmit to Headquarters material gathered in their respective regions.

Recommendation 5, Diversifying DPI audiovisual materials.

A. Systematic contact with broadcasters in the different regions by, for example, attendance at annual meetings of regional broadcasters associations, should be established to the extent that resources permit. One aim of this contact should be to ensure that the Department does not miss opportunities to place vignettes and other low-cost audiovisual materials on the United Nations in external television programming.

B. Further diversification of radio programmes to reach specific target audiences should be pursued through collaboration with other organizations in JUNIC that can provide relevant audio material.

C. A policy clarification should be issued to encourage United Nations information centres and information services to cooperate in the production of local radio and television programmes. They should be provided with support from Headquarters for these efforts. [EV/96/02/5] 3/

27. After 1985, the Department could no longer cover the cost of transmitting its radio programmes through the rented transmitters of Voice of America; the Department increased its telephone feeds to a few broadcasters and its mail distribution of taped programmes to a large number of radio stations. Taped programme distribution, however, has its limitations and uncertainties. The 1992 radio survey by the Department shows that, in most regions, 30 per cent of programmes are not received on time, and that only 45 per cent of stations answering the survey have regular time slots for United Nations programmes. The 1995 radio survey by the Department notes that some stations expressed concerns such as never receiving the World in Review tapes in time for them to be useful. These conditions make the development of a listenership difficult.

28. Recently, the Department has been exploring new ways of disseminating its radio programmes. New technologies provide a wide array of choices. For example, wherever possible, the Department is distributing the World in Review by radio, telephone and Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) circuits. In Geneva, correspondents are sending broadcast-quality signals from the Geneva Office to their radio stations through ISDN lines. The satellite-based telecommunications system of the United Nations currently under development, with its audio transmission capacity, could be an important channel in the transmission of radio signals. The signals can be relayed directly to regional audiences through leased transmitters, or to national broadcasting organizations that wish to rebroadcast United Nations radio programmes. A permanent broadcasting facility may be useful to other departments and development agencies that need to broadcast targeted information, as is the case for peace-keeping missions and other field-oriented programmes.

Recommendation 6. Study of a United Nations broadcasting capacity. A feasibility study covering the technical, financial, programming and managerial implications of the development of a United Nations radio broadcasting capacity should be undertaken and submitted for consideration to the Committee on Information at its 1997 session. [EV/96/02/6] 3/

III. SERVICES

A. Services to the media

1. Press coverage

29. The press is supplied daily with information on activities of the United Nations in the form of press releases and related materials such as daily summaries, briefing papers and notes to correspondents; most press releases and related materials are produced at Headquarters and Geneva. The General Assembly, in paragraph 18 of its resolution 50/31 B, expressed its full support for the wide and prompt coverage of United Nations activities through a continuation of United Nations press releases in both working languages of the

Secretariat. In the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 a distinction is made between summaries of meetings for use by press correspondents, delegations and the United Nations Secretariat, and press releases prepared in a form appropriate for immediate distribution by media agencies. 8/ Most of the press releases issued belong to the former category; press correspondents interviewed by the Central Evaluation Unit stated that they use the press releases mostly to inform themselves of activities they cannot cover, and for possible follow-up at a later time; the information they contain, except for backgrounders and wrap-up, is not frequently used for dissemination in the media in the form it is presented.

30. DPI materials in general cannot compete with the capacity of news agencies to cover breaking news. For a number of correspondents, including those working for the major news agencies, the substance of meetings they considered newsworthy needed to be reported without delay. Correspondents stated that documents coming out of the Department as press releases or daily summaries tended to arrive too late to be useful in covering breaking news. The majority of correspondents interviewed by the Central Evaluation Unit commented that the most useful contribution of the Department was to provide background information, such as the fact-sheets prepared for the promotion of major conferences in 1994-1995, or brief "facts and figures" notes, which presented analyses and facts in a quotable format. These had appeal because of their brevity and because they spared correspondents the effort of research. Another issue correspondents mentioned was the need to target the various sectors of the media. In recent years, for example, a number of the press kits issued were well received by the specialized press and non-governmental organizations, while correspondents working for the general press or the electronic media did not find them as useful. Press releases and related materials transmitted electronically to the United Nations information centres and a number of other United Nations offices worldwide were also valued by information centre staff and local media for the background information they provide and their comprehensive coverage of United Nations activities.

31. Although the range and nature of United Nations activities differ substantially from those of other agencies, it is of interest to note that press releases of organizations such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) or the World Bank do not assume the function of meeting coverage as is the case with DPI press releases. Press releases issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have special presentations whenever it is necessary to draw attention to time-sensitive information. The World Health Organization (WHO) produces several categories of press releases: those for the general press, including short releases for wire services; those for the scientific press; and special releases for specific regional or technical issues.

32. In addition to press releases, a variety of related materials are issued regularly by the News Coverage Service and on special occasions by other services of the Department. The production of these materials does not systematically target the different needs of various sectors of the media.

> Recommendation 7, Information materials for the press. Resources permitting, in addition to the issuance of press releases primarily serving

the function of meeting coverage, the News Coverage Service should regularly issue, and immediately post on electronic information networks, background information and information on newsworthy developments targeted to the interests of the general and specialized media. The News Coverage Service should provide this enhanced coverage by coordinating and pooling resources with other services, such as the Office of the Spokesperson, the Information and Planning Service and the United Nations information service at Geneva, as well as relevant services of programmes and agencies of the United Nations system. [EV/96/02/7] 3/

2. Spokespersons

33. At Headquarters, the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General offers daily briefings and other information services to the news media and delegations. Other spokespersons are appointed, as needed, in, for example, Geneva or peace-keeping operations.

34. In a 1994 study on the Office of the Spokesperson, prepared by a consultant, it was noted that reporters say that it is rare that the daily briefing offers a story on the main news topic of the day; even in the midst of major news events in which the United Nations is central, no comment is offered that has not been released in, e.g., Sarajevo or Geneva hours earlier, nor is meaningful background described to put events in perspective. Correspondents interviewed by the Central Evaluation Unit at the end of 1995 were also of this view. In the first quarter of 1996, the situation appears to have significantly improved. Regarding inquiries from the press, the Spokesperson and designated contact officers in the departments are striving for a same-day answer; but too frequently, comments and reactions come too late to get into news reports. Sometimes, no answer is provided. Because of slow response and the perception that the spokespersons are often not well informed, reporters do not rely on the Office of the Spokesperson as their chief source for breaking news about United Nations activities, particularly field operations. They are more likely to get their information from delegations of Member States, non-governmental organizations or government agencies.

35. It is often difficult for the Office of the Spokesperson to get responses to urgent questions on breaking news stories in time for the daily briefings. Information components in field missions do not always transmit information to that Office; guidance is received from the Secretary-General and senior staff regularly but not each day. The departments and the senior political advisers do not have regular interaction with the Office of the Spokesperson. In 1994, department heads expressed a willingness to have staff from that Office in their own staff meetings on a routine basis, as is the practice in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations.

Recommendation 8, Public information aspects of departmental actions.

A. Professional staff in the Office of the Spokesperson should be assigned departments concerned with major news stories and should attend relevant departmental staff meetings, and receive regular briefings from senior staff in their department of assignment on the public information aspects of the work of the department and important decisions made.

B. The Department of Public Information should bring to the attention of the Office of the Spokesperson relevant information originating from departments not covered directly by the Office. [EV/96/02/8] 3/

3. Access to United Nations officials and other primary sources of information

36. In 1995, at Headquarters, the Secretary-General granted formal interviews, participated in press conferences and interacted with the press in less formal circumstances. He increased his interactions with the press during his official travels. Many correspondents expressed the view that the Secretary-General's press and public relations are most effective when he handles them directly himself. Correspondents would like him to conduct more press conferences in New York, and to give more comments to the press spontaneously. Yet it is recognized that it is impossible for the Secretary-General and his Executive Office to handle the huge number of requests for information directly.

37. Many journalists emphasized the importance of direct contacts with primary sources, such as United Nations officials in the Secretariat, agencies and field missions but, apart from those whose responsibilities include press contact, senior officials have little direct interaction with the media. In 1995, the Secretary-General advised directors of United Nations information centres to contact visiting officials and ask them to do interviews, and to contact senior officials at Headquarters directly if they had requests for satellite interviews. However, there are no guidelines on media relations issued to the Secretariat as a whole, and senior officials do not feel encouraged to speak to the press. This inability of United Nations officials to brief the press routinely on an informal basis, even in cases where information is of a technical nature, or already made public, handicaps efforts to shape stories and get the Organization's views across to the public. The World Bank, in contrast, has adopted a policy on disclosure of information to improve the transparency of its activities and also to define clearly what information should remain confidential. Comparable policy has not been adopted at the United Nations. Consequently, in United Nations departments and offices there is no common understanding of what services or support should be given to the media; no communication strategy exists that could serve as the basis for granting or rejecting requests for interviews.

38. At Headquarters, responsibility for servicing the media is divided between several units. There is no adequate pooling of information with agencies and programmes of the United Nations system. Press conferences could be better prepared: documentation is often not distributed to the media in advance of the event; speakers are selected who are not good communicators, or who have not been assisted with the preparation of their presentation. Schedules of press conferences, and other press encounters, by United Nations officials and delegations sometimes conflict, or are too clustered, making it difficult for the media to cover important viewpoints and information.

39. Similar problems occur in Geneva where, however, the degree of satisfaction of press correspondents is somewhat higher. Most agencies and programmes have defined communication strategies that take into account the needs of the media,

and their spokespersons participate in the press briefings chaired twice a week by the Director of the United Nations Information Service. Regarding access by the media to United Nations officials, and the release of timely information, the strong coordinating role played by the Director of the Information Service is seen as beneficial.

Recommendation 9, Secretary-General's bulletin on disclosure of information. A Secretary-General's bulletin should be issued by the end of 1996 to facilitate prompt access to United Nations officials by media organizations. The bulletin should define what information must remain confidential and aim at encouraging United Nations officials to speak informally to the media, and to accept requests for formal interviews. This guidance should emphasize the importance of the maximum feasible transparency of operations. The Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General should monitor the application of the guidance in the bulletin. [EV/96/02/9] 3/

Recommendation 10, Effectiveness of press conferences and speaking engagements.

A. To reduce scheduling conflicts among press conferences at Headquarters and at Geneva by officials of the United Nations and officials of Governments and other organizations, the Office of the Spokesperson should oversee the schedules of and preparations for such events.

B. The Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the Office of the Spokesperson, should ensure that United Nations officials scheduled for press conferences or speaking engagements receive guidance on preparing statements for the press or the public and training on how to communicate effectively. [EV/96/02/10] 3/

4. Audiovisual coverage

40. The worldwide surveys of public opinion commissioned by the Department between 1989 and 1993 show that television was the general public's primary source of information on the United Nations in 21 of the 27 countries surveyed. Several units of the Department provide services and audiovisual products to the media. The Television News (UNTV) pool coverage of open United Nations meetings and official events is a continuous source of television materials on which broadcasters increasingly rely. At Headquarters, television signals are transmitted live to international television syndicators for immediate worldwide dissemination, and directly to international television organizations. A video news highlights package is produced daily by UNTV in New York to supplement any live television feeds received by the international news syndicators and other television organizations. In addition, the United Nations News Audio Information Service (UNNAIS) offers a diversified programme, available to anyone by telephone; the system receives an average of 800 to 1,000 calls per week, placed mostly by delegations, press correspondents and a few radio stations. Other services are provided by the Audio-Visual Library and the Photo Unit. Owing to increased demand for coverage of United Nations activities, it has become difficult, in a few units, to maintain the required level of services.

41. Broadcasters increasingly request audiovisual archival materials to supplement their news stories on the United Nations. The inclusion of past coverage items and outtakes from film and video productions enhances the news stories. Several Department units are competing to use the same engineering resources for the increasing mastertape recordings of events covered, as well as videotape editing and videotape dubbing. Requests from multimedia developers are also on the rise. Historical audio recordings, photos and video clips have been ordered for many educational CD-ROM projects. Modern equipment and technology have been introduced in the radio, photo and video production areas; however, they have remained stand-alone systems. Further coordination and integration of audiovisual services would enhance comprehensiveness of the material delivered to the users.

42. At Headquarters, correspondents and visiting media do not use the United Nations production facilities frequently, and the audiovisual coverage of events is almost entirely done by in-house crews under contract to the United Nations, in contrast to the situation at the Geneva Office. At Headquarters, the coverage by the Department is regarded as useful by a number of correspondents and syndicators. However, shortcomings hinder the activities of the visual media. UNTV can cover only the most important events and priority meetings, and sometimes not even these in their entirety; increased coverage by UNTV would not be cost-effective. Open events at Headquarters, usually at the committee level, that cannot be pooled by UNTV have been covered by accredited television crews following the approval of the Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit. However, established procedures do not facilitate the presence of outside filming crews to fill gaps on short notice, or - on occasions of special interest to them - to produce material other than that obtained from UNTV. At Headquarters, there are several locations that could have a simple technical set-up and background that identifies the United Nations, for impromptu interviews by the visual media. Practices need to be reviewed thoroughly, considering the importance of the visual media.

> Recommendation 11, Coverage of United Nations activities by the visual media. Taking into account security considerations and the concerns of delegations, the visual media should be guaranteed access to activities of the United Nations adequate to their needs. This direct coverage by the visual media should be maintained in a manner that is not disruptive to the work of the Organization under procedures, such as pooling of assignments, worked out in consultation with the media organizations involved. [EV/96/02/11] 3/

5. Media liaison

43. A small unit, the Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit, evaluates, authorizes and coordinates media coverage at Headquarters and at major United Nations conferences away from Headquarters. In 1995, the Unit processed a total of 20,039 accreditations and carried out 11,801 liaison assignments. During the same period, the Unit contacted, on a variety of issues, a total of 6,636 news wires and photo agencies, as well as still photographers of newspapers and magazines. Although these routine activities appeared to have been carried out to the satisfaction of delegations, as well as of substantive departments and

specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the Unit lacks the time and resources to review the process and adapt it to the new, more cost-effective computerized systems.

44. In resolution 47/73 B of 14 December 1992, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide an assessment of measures to ensure that the working facilities provided for the media are fully adequate to meet present and future needs. A task force was set up, but no major improvements could be undertaken, in part for lack of funds. In that resolution, the Assembly also requested greater coordination within the Department in relation to the provision of facilities and services for the media. The Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit continues to work towards that end.

45. Since the Office of the Spokesperson and other units in the Department are involved in liaison tasks, the role of the Unit is sometimes limited to the issuance of pass forms and escorting media crews. The main responsibility for scheduling interviews with United Nations officials and for organizing press conferences lies with the Office of the Spokesperson. A number of issues fall into a grey area and are not actively pursued by either service. Apart from major conferences and meetings, the potential interest of lesser or more informal events to different sectors of the media is not assessed, and steps to facilitate coverage not taken. Requests for coverage involving technical arrangements to be made by these media are handled as normal administrative functions and do not take fully into account the newsworthiness of an event. Requests must be submitted in writing and authorizations may involve several levels of responsibility; as a result, opportunities for a wider coverage of United Nations activities can be lost. A number of events are made known to the Unit with only a few hours lead time, which means that it is difficult to finalize technical and security arrangements. More long-term arrangements need to be made to facilitate the work of media organizations that frequently cover United Nations activities.

Recommendation 12, Strengthening media liaison.

A. The Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit should be responsible for all aspects of requests by the media, in close collaboration with the Office of the Spokesperson.

B. In carrying out this function, the Unit should coordinate with all relevant technical, security and substantive services units within the Secretariat in such a way as to provide same-day response to media requests.

C. The Unit should make analogous longer-term coordination arrangements in preparation for coverage of scheduled upcoming events by eliciting from the media requests for future services. [EV/96/02/12] 3/

B. Services at the regional and local levels

1. Partnerships

46. Initiatives have been taken by the Department of Public Information at Headquarters, and in other duty stations by United Nations information services and information centres, to establish partnerships with media organizations. In 1994, in his statement to the Committee on Information, the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information suggested further developing partnerships by exploring agreements with some key governmental and regional information agencies.

47. Ways to improve television reporting in developing countries on the activities of the United Nations were discussed at the 1995 meeting of the Joint United Nations Information Committee. JUNIC noted that global satellite television broadcasters, and financially better-equipped national networks, have direct and same-day access to United Nations video news feeds, while broadcasters in the developing countries, owing to a lack of funding for daily satellite transmissions, get this material with a delay, if at all, through United Nations information centres or via news film agencies. The pooling of resources between JUNIC members and several low-cost alternatives have been discussed. These alternatives include transmission of a daily 10-minute news feed through partners who already operate transponders on the Intelsat network.

48. The Department organizes many types of encounters with the press, including, in 1994-1995, a few at the regional level for the promotion of the major conferences. A number of United Nations information centres organize, frequently in collaboration with national authorities, briefings or seminars with the press, focusing on current issues or special events. Centre directors interviewed stated that these low-cost encounters are effective, particularly when their news content is enhanced by the presence of a visiting United Nations official. At Headquarters, round tables with senior editors have been discontinued, for lack of resources. Once a year, the Department conducts a programme for young journalists from developing countries, in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Centre directors stated that the programme is useful and, if more journalists participated in it, could create a corps of journalists well equipped to report on the activities of the Organization. It should be noted that some United Nations agencies and programmes, sometimes in collaboration with bilateral aid agencies, organize training seminars for journalists. Although approaches and purposes are not identical, a degree of coordination is possible, in particular to strengthen partnerships and networks with the press.

> Recommendation 13. Support to the media at the regional and local levels. The Department should continue to develop low-cost initiatives, such as those mentioned in paragraphs 47 and 48, that would increase coverage of United Nations activities by providing more targeted services to the media at the regional and local levels. These initiatives should be implemented by the pooling of resources between those JUNIC members with relevant television and training programmes and in partnership with regional and local media organizations. [EV/96/02/13] 3/

2. United Nations information centres

49. More than half of the operating costs of United Nations information centres are for renting and maintaining premises. In its resolution 1405 (XIV) of 1 December 1959, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to enlist the cooperation of the Member States concerned in providing all possible facilities for the establishment of new information centres and in assisting actively in efforts to promote wider public understanding of the aims and activities of the United Nations. In 1994, the average operating costs incurred by United Nations information centres established before the adoption of resolution 1405 (XIV) were 2.7 times higher than for information centres established after its adoption; expenditures for rental of premises were eight times higher for the former.

50. The average information centre budget for translation into local languages and production of information materials is approximately $3,000 per year. Centre directors commented that budget limitations frequently make it difficult to distribute documents sent to them, and there are cases when centres cannot meet requests by media organizations for transmission of time-sensitive materials. The collaboration of centres in joint projects is sometimes impossible, for budgetary reasons. Small amounts of seed money received in 1994-1995 for promotion of the major conferences - a total of approximately $130,000 for all 63 United Nations information centres - enabled the centres to organize a relatively large number of activities. A number of them receive cash contributions from host Governments; unfortunately, contributions by Member States have fallen since the biennium 1990-1991: there was a 40 per cent decrease between 1991 and 1994.

51. In 1995, ACABQ recommended that the administrative support for the centres be reviewed with a view to releasing more resources for operational activities. 9/ Over the past 10 years, savings have been realized through the reduction of staff - 30 per cent of the Professional posts - and a strategy of integration within the offices of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) resident representatives, where possible. From the point of view of programme delivery, the integration has not been successful everywhere. The Department and UNDP have agreed to increase staff training. In countries where there is no UNDP office, the United Nations information centre acts as the focal point for the United Nations system as a whole and is asked to provide a variety of services. A number of centre directors spend a substantial amount of their time on liaison and representation functions and are not able to focus on their primary function.

Recommendation 14, Support to United Nations information centres.

A. For United Nations information centres established before 1960 that do not have host country agreements, increased efforts should be made by the Department to negotiate such agreements reflecting the principles of General Assembly resolution 1405 (XIV).

B. All countries hosting United Nations information centres should be encouraged by Headquarters to contribute funds to the operational activities of the centres. [EV/96/02/14] 3/

C. Services to non-governmental organizations and the general public

1. Non-governmental organizations

52. Nearly 1,500 non-governmental organizations are associated with the Department; one of the criteria for association is that the non-governmental organization must have the commitment and means to conduct effective information programmes about United Nations activities through enlisting cooperation of print and broadcast media. In addition, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council are granted association with the Department upon written request. The Non-Governmental Organization Executive Committee acts in a liaison capacity and represents the interests of non-governmental organizations associated with the Department; at Headquarters, the Non-Governmental Organization Section supports their work. The annual non-governmental organization conference and orientation seminars draw generally positive comments. The main criticism of the Department's efforts concerns lack of access to United Nations documents and information. The NGO resource centre receives documents long after they have been issued. A proposal to relocate the NGO resource centre to the Periodical Room of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library was made to the interdepartmental working group on non-governmental organizations in 1995. The working group considered that, if feasible, the move could probably facilitate the work of non-governmental organizations. Also, the editors of a number of non-governmental organizations with influential public information programmes have not been authorized by the Department to attend press briefings and related activities at Headquarters.

53. The Non-Governmental Organization Section, the United Nations information centres and other services of the Department are all engaged in joint projects with non-governmental organizations, through joint information programmes for the commemoration of international days and weeks - often at the suggestion of non-governmental organizations - or through the translation of information materials into national languages. Almost half of the non-governmental organization participants surveyed at the 1993 annual conference expressed considerable interest in such joint projects with the Department, and, with appropriate safeguards, there is the potential to significantly increase the number of joint projects. The Non-Governmental Organization Section is in contact with associated non-governmental organizations that actively disseminate information on United Nations activities. Owing to the large increase in the number of non-governmental organizations associated with the Department, the Non-Governmental Organization Section is not in a position to monitor the dissemination capacity of all associated non-governmental organizations. The growth in the number of non-governmental organizations associated with the Department is due to the much larger number of non-governmental organizations interested in the global issues addressed by United Nations conferences.

54. At the subregional and country levels, United Nations information centres maintain important relations with non-governmental organizations not associated with the Department. Conversely, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council have limited contacts with United Nations information centres. Considering the multiplicity of non-governmental organizations at the country level, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness

of the outreach of information centres. The UNIC Manual urges centre directors to set up committees or coalitions linking local non-governmental organizations that have common interests, focusing particularly on those organizations with interest in economic and social questions. There are examples of non-governmental organization committees or coalitions set up by information centres but there is no indication of the extent of the practice in the Headquarters United Nations information centre database.

55. The World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) has national United Nations associations in 83 countries in all regions. The aim of the organization is to devote itself entirely to the support of the Charter of the United Nations and to the promotion of public awareness and understanding of the activities of the United Nations and its agencies. These organizations are very active in a number of countries. However, the United Nations associations are organizations whose outlook and impact differ greatly from one country to another, even if they are governed by identical statutes. Considering their statutes, United Nations associations are, among non-governmental organizations, the most logical partners of United Nations information centres; a number of centres have established close collaboration with them, but other centres should be encouraged to pursue a policy that would be mutually beneficial.

56. The 1968 review by the Secretariat of United Nations/non-governmental organization cooperation recommended that specialized assistance be provided to understaffed United Nations information centres and that regional non-governmental organization activities be developed; the Office of Public Information planned to attach non-governmental organization liaison officers to the major regional offices of the United Nations (E/4476, paras. 31 and 36). The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1297 (XLIV) of 27 May 1968, endorsed the proposal of organizing regional conferences of non-governmental organizations. For lack of resources, no regional conferences have been held since the 1960s. On this question, non-governmental organizations interviewed stated that organizations not in proximity to a main United Nations centre are at a disadvantage and that more exchange of information is needed at the regional level. Staff of the Department stated that, in the present context, with the cooperation of the commissions and each United Nations information centre, conferences on the model of the annual non-governmental organization conference at Headquarters can be organized at little cost. Currently, the Department is working with the Non-Governmental Organization Executive Committee on a project entitled "NGO-NET", which proposes to hold non-governmental organization gatherings at the national level, in various regions, focusing on a United Nations theme.

57. There are services in various sectors of the Organization supporting the United Nations/non-governmental organization relation, such as the Non-Governmental Organization Sections of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development and of the Department of Public Information. In addition, the objective of the inter-agency Non-Governmental Liaison Service is to foster an improved relationship between the United Nations system and the non-governmental organization community on development and related issues. Each has a rather small staff. In addition, a range of United Nations programmes and agencies have appointed officers to work with non-governmental organizations; non-governmental organizations interviewed commented positively on the support

provided by these personnel, but said that they were sometimes overwhelmed by the scope of tasks; they commented also on the duplication of activities. In 1995, the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status of the Economic and Social Council suggested that there be a thorough examination at the Secretariat level of the total resources available to support the United Nations/non-governmental organization relation, and of legislative mandates, constituencies and users of services. In September 1995, the interdepartmental working group on non-governmental organizations was re-established. Its work is coordinated by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. The focal point stressed that her role would be to facilitate the emergence of common guidelines for collaborative relations between departments and non-governmental organizations.

Recommendation 15, Strategy for collaboration with non-governmental organizations. In consultation with the Non-Governmental Organization Executive Committee, CONGO and WFUNA, the Department should, by the end of 1996, define priority areas for collaboration with non-governmental organizations, with special attention to those organizations that have as their mission the promotion of the goals and purposes of the United Nations. The overall aim should be to develop the capacity of non-governmental organizations to disseminate public information on United Nations activities. [EV/96/02/15] 3/

Recommendation 16, Coordination of United Nations services working with non-governmental organizations. The interdepartmental working group on non-governmental organizations should, by the end of 1996, make proposals to JUNIC for joint implementation of support to non-governmental organizations. Taking into account legislative mandates, these proposals should include, for example, the merging of newsletters and publications and jointly organized meetings and seminars. [EV/96/02/16] 3/

2. The general public

58. In New York, Geneva and Vienna, several units of the Department of Public Information organize visits and seminars, answer inquiries and make arrangements for speaking engagements aimed at the general public. Non-governmental organizations and educational institutions also receive these services, which provide them with an additional source of information. At the local level, United Nations information centres have a comparable range of activities. They also maintain reference libraries used in large part by the informed public.

59. In 1995, there were more than 400,000 visitors at Headquarters and more than 150,000 at the Geneva Office. In recent years, proposals have been made aimed at increasing the number of visitors and the appeal of guided tours. It was noted that tours are not tailored to obvious audience segments. In 1995, an internal DPI proposal, concerning the updating of exhibits on the tour route, noted that exhibits should convey a clear and consistent message and have some built-in element that can be easily updated; it would be desirable for all exhibits to have some components specifically designed to cater to younger visitors. A similar situation exists at Geneva.

Recommendation 17, Updating public exhibits. The public exhibits used for guided tours or group briefings at Headquarters, Geneva and Vienna should be regularly brought up to date in terms of style and content. Extrabudgetary contributions should be solicited for this purpose. [EV/96/02/17] 3/

D. Services to substantive departments

60. In 1986, the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency and the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations proposed, in recommendation 37 (2), that information activities then conducted by several departments and offices in the Secretariat should, to the extent possible, be consolidated in the Department of Public Information. 10/ The Management Advisory Service reviewed the situation between 1988 and 1992 and concluded that collaboration between the Department and substantive offices needed improvement, although consolidation of all information activities within the Department might not be effective or even feasible. In a number of cases, the separation of substantive information and public information activities is difficult. Furthermore, legislative bodies have sometimes assigned mandates to a substantive office that include public information activities. A number of offices have funding for promotional activities. In 1995, the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, in addressing the Committee on Information, stated that the concept of partnership is fundamental to the Department's new approach within the Secretariat, which entails the sharing of responsibility, the strengthening of coordination in planning public information policies and programmes with substantive departments, offices and agencies, the pooling of resources for the implementation of information tasks and the recognition of public information as a decisive factor in United Nations initiatives both at Headquarters and in the field.

1. Promotional activities

61. Within the Department, the promotion of thematic issues is primarily the responsibility of the Information and Planning Service. Its clients can be considered the relevant United Nations departments and offices concerned with those issues. Services provided include developing communications strategies to generate media interest in the work of substantive departments and promoting their publications. During the biennium 1994-1995, the Department adopted a focal point approach to preparing for major conferences. In each case, it designated a senior officer as focal point to oversee the implementation of the communications strategy, additional funding was provided, and the Service increased its coordination efforts with substantive departments and agencies and programmes of the United Nations system. In addition, the Department has worked with the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Political Affairs in establishing a consultative mechanism on media strategies for peace-keeping and other field operations that has proved to be effective.

62. Owing to the demand for promotional activities, resources are spread thin. The Department tries to overcome this by using a task force approach in

promoting themes and issues. Focal points in substantive departments stated that, in general, information officers in the Department are not in close and regular contact with staff in their departments, and that more involvement with the substantive work of departments by DPI staff is needed. On the other hand, substantive departments rarely define their broad priorities for public information to assist the Department in the formulation of its programme budget proposals. There are examples of substantive departments producing materials and carrying out activities of immediate interest for public information which are not always brought to the attention of DPI staff.

2. United Nations publications

63. In 1993, the responsibility for the implementation of the publications programme of the United Nations was transferred from the Office of Conference Services to the Department of Public Information. In the context of this transfer, the Department set up a working group to review United Nations publications policies, practices and operations. The review indicated that there were problems with quality control and distribution. It was noted that quality control of the contents and presentation of publications through peer reviews and other procedures was not systematic; no coherent mechanisms existed to stop the publication of a manuscript whose contents were so mediocre as to reflect negatively on the image of the United Nations. Regarding distribution, the review noted that print-runs and distribution patterns seemed to be mainly based on precedents, some so old that it was difficult to trace their origins. A number of recommendations were made on the need to reinforce the Publications Board, to modify and expand the role of its working group and to delegate a wide authority to its Executive Secretary. Through further restructuring, the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information was appointed Chairman of the Publications Board in 1994; in 1995, the Sales Section was transferred to the Department.

64. Regarding print-runs and distribution, there are indications of progress, owing in part to the action of the working group of the Publications Board and of the various units of the Department concerned with publications. Quality control, however, is difficult to exercise; departments must be responsible for the quality of the publications they produce. The Publications Board can influence practices through policy decisions and recommendations, but, until 1993, it had not met regularly, and severe pressure of time can prevent proper review. Evidence that publications are filling a need is not reviewed systematically; feedback on the needs of the readership is rarely obtained, either for a new title or for a new language version; several publications may be issued on related topics, when one consolidated report would have been more cost-effective. The 1993 report of the Secretary-General on the Publications Policy of the United Nations stated that "the Publications Board is considering ways to introduce new mechanisms (such as a Reading or Selection Committee) and/or procedures to improve the process of reviewing manuscripts to ensure that publications fulfil identifiable mandates and meet the criteria for publication. Whenever appropriate, encouragement would be given to the publication of interdisciplinary works, prepared through cooperation among several departments or offices, including cooperation among several organizations in the United Nations system" (A/C.5/48/10, para. 19). Pending consideration of the report by

the General Assembly, the Publications Board decided to refrain from proposing any specific changes to its mandate, including added emphasis on its policy-making role. Within the Department, apart from units concerned mostly with production and distribution, there is at present no other formal procedure by which the Department of Public Information gives advice to departments on their publication programmes. It frequently offers assistance on an informal basis; further exchange and coordination is being considered for the future.

Recommendation 18, Policy for approving new United Nations publications.

A. The Publications Board should adopt a policy by the end of 1996 requiring departments to establish departmental reading committees, or a procedure for peer review of technical publications, which should follow standard external procedures for such reviews adapted to the requirements of the United Nations.

B. Subsequent to the inclusion of a publication in the publications programme, submissions by departments to the working group of the Publications Board should be accompanied by an assessment of the reading committee or peer review mechanism evaluating the manuscript and identifying target audiences and the dissemination strategy to be followed in promoting the publication.

C. Where the reading committee or peer review assessment suggests a rewriting of the manuscript, this should be done before the departmental submission is made to the Publications Board. [EV/96/02/18] 3/

3. Library services

65. The Library's primary function is to enable the delegations, Secretariat and other official groups of the Organization to obtain, with the greatest possible speed, convenience and economy, the library materials and information needed in the execution of their duties (A/C.5/298, p. 1). The Dag Hammarskjöld Library was transferred to the Department after the 1993 restructuring. The Library at the United Nations Office at Geneva remained under Conference Services. A number of specialized tools for reference needs and to assist outside libraries in their use of United Nations documentation are produced; recurrent reference tools to assist libraries are produced from the common database, the United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBIS), such as UNBIS Plus on CD-ROM and the CD-ROM on human rights. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library is mandated to be the archival library for all United Nations documents and publications as well as responsible for providing complete bibliographical access to them.

(a) User support

66. In the early 1990s, reviews of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library observed that the reference services that the Library is expected to provide were not adequate and that duplication of some functions within the Library caused delays and sometimes loss of documents. There were significant gaps in document databases and document collections, in particular overseas documents and publications,

unsymbolled material and series distributed by issuing departments outside the regular Headquarters distribution mechanism. Steps have been taken to streamline operations, to improve indexing and reduce gaps, and to develop further computer applications. The situation is not yet entirely satisfactory. An Integrated Library Management System (ILMS) is in the process of being installed. It is expected that ILMS will force a streamlining of operations, especially in the area of documentation control and indexing.

67. For United Nations documents, UNBIS is the main tool to serve information retrieval needs. Bibliographic tools help the user make more efficient use of textual databases; however, users are increasingly requesting access to full-text databases in addition to bibliographical information. The Library plans to create and maintain UNBIS files on ILMS when it is fully operational and to devise modalities for a more seamless interface between UNBIS and the Optical Disk System (ODS), which contains the full-text of United Nations documents. While complex search strategies that are available in UNBIS may not be available in ILMS, the new system will provide for more user-friendly retrieval access.

68. At Headquarters, assistance to researchers on questions regarding documents and publications of the specialized agencies is sometimes problematic. There is a need to develop further access to and exchange of information; some agencies do not publish printed indexes, and not every agency publishes a bibliographical CD-ROM or provides on-line access to their information resources. Away from Headquarters, with the exception of the Geneva Library, other United Nations libraries are not able to provide full access to United Nations documentation. In 1992, on the question of an integrated library network of the United Nations system, the Joint Inspection Unit stressed that increased attention should be given by organizations of the United Nations system to establishing effective linkages between all components of existing or potential networks (A/47/669, annex, para. 146). Avenues of inter-library cooperation can be pursued, such as creating interfaces to access different bibliographical files, and searching other organizations' databases via telecommunications links like Internet. UNBIS is an example of a joint cooperative bibliographic network, of the Dag Hammarskjöld and Geneva Libraries, and the Dag Hammarskjöld Library is reviewing the possibility of including more partners in this network, beginning with the regional commissions. Each partner would share the processing and indexing of the documents originating in its office by feeding one or more centralized databases, in conjunction with the Optical Disk System network.

69. Acquiring the information resources needed has traditionally meant owning printed collections; technological innovations have transformed this process, and increasing amounts of information can now be delivered through other non-print media such as microforms and on-line databases. In recent years, acquisitions of external printed publications and subscriptions have been reduced, where possible and advisable, and the volume of inter-library loan services, in particular through electronic document delivery, has increased. Acquisitions are still needed for reference material and serials available only in hard copy and for electronic resources such as CD-ROMs. This gradual shift from ownership to access has both increased the importance and expanded the role of reference librarians. Now, as "electronic acquisition librarians", with faster and wider access to information, external reference librarians have

experienced a sharp increase in the number of on-line searches requested. Users require more assistance for searches in on-line databases, and need to be kept informed of the availability of current and specialized information. The Dag Hammarskjöld Library has made concentrated efforts in both on- and off-site training in the use of commercial, full-text databases. However, its reference librarians have limited time to learn how to access the latest information available efficiently. Selective dissemination of information (SDI) - tailored information provided at regular intervals to a user - has not been pursued aggressively. Departments are interested in accessing directly on-line services and information contained in CD-ROMs. The Library can play a clearing-house function, with savings to the Organization, particularly in the case of on-line services.

Recommendation 19, Plan for improving access to information. By the end of the first quarter of 1997, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library should develop, on the basis of its reference desks' survey of users' needs, a plan for improving access to United Nations documentation and on-line services by delegations, Secretariat officials and other official groups. [EV/96/02/19] 3/

(b) Depository libraries

70. Through its system of depository libraries, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library disseminates information about the Organization and its activities. The Library oversees the United Nations depository library system, while the specialized agencies' depository library systems are administered by the services of the respective agencies. In 1995, there were 351 United Nations depository libraries in 140 countries or territories; a number of these were also specialized agencies depositories. In general, these libraries do not have public information functions; a few have been able, although rarely, to organize special events around a specific theme of interest to their users. In 1994, external auditors recommended that control of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library over the performance of depository libraries should be strengthened through more frequent visits, assessments and training workshops. The fundamental problem is the complexity of managing collections of United Nations documents; in all regions, a number of libraries, even those well staffed, have difficulties maintaining the collections in a manner useful to users. There are no resources to increase the number of visits and workshops to depository libraries by Dag Hammarskjöld Library staff; activities have been organized on an ad hoc basis or when additional funds are provided by Governments. Efforts are being made to strengthen control over the performance of depository libraries through more effective coordination with UNDP and the specialized agencies. Monitoring of the system of depository libraries needs to include information on whether the material is received or not, and whether the recipient library wants to continue to receive United Nations documentation, as well as the number of copies and language versions needed.

Recommendation 20, Depository libraries. In order for the Dag Hammarskjöld Library to exercise effective oversight of the depository library system, a revolving fund for visits and training should be established as recommended by the Publications Board. An amount from the contribution of each depository library should be set aside to fund a better monitoring

programme of visits and training, including workshops in the management and use of United Nations document collection for the staff of depository libraries, particularly in developing regions. [EV/96/02/20] 3/

IV. ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION

71. Under its terms of reference, the Committee on Information reviews United Nations public information policies and activities. The present report, together with the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee on Programme and Coordination on it, should be brought to the attention of the Committee on Information.

Recommendation 21. The present report, together with the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee on Programme and Coordination on it, should be submitted to the Committee on Information for review and action. [EV/96/02/21] 3/

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/49/16), para. 34.

2/ Ibid., Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 21 (A/48/21), paras. 34 and 69.

3/ Office of Internal Oversight Services tracking number.

4/ Survey of NEXIS (Dag Hammarskjöld Library) WIRES file, a computer file containing as of 31 December 1994, more than 50 wire services, including AFF, AP, ASAHI, Inter-Press Service, JIJI, KYODO, Reuters, ITTAR-TASS, UPI, Xinhua; more than 2 million wire stories were filed in 1994.

5/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/48/16), para. 220.

6/ Ibid., Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/50/6/Rev.1), vol. II, para. 25.3.

7/ Ibid., Supplement No. 7 and corrigendum (A/50/7 and Corr.1), para. VII.8.

8/ Ibid., Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 6 and corrigendum (A/47/6/Rev.1 and Corr.1), vol. II, para. 38.17.

9/ Ibid., Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 7 and corrigendum (A/50/7 and Corr.1), para. VII.20.

10/ Ibid., Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 49 (A/41/49).

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Item 4 (d) of the provisional agenda*

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: EVALUATION

In-depth evaluation of peace-keeping operations: termination phase

Note by the Secretary-General

In conformity with paragraph 5 (e) (i) of General Assembly resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Committee for Programme and Coordination the attached report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services entitled "In-depth evaluation of peace-keeping operations: termination phase", dated 20 March 1996. The report has been reviewed by the relevant departments and offices. The Secretary-General is in agreement with its recommendations.

* E/AC.51/1996/1.

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ANNEX

[20 March 1996]

In-depth evaluation of peace-keeping operations: termination-phase

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

SUMMARY

The present report deals with the termination phase of peace-keeping operations and complements two previous evaluation reports on peace-keeping operations (E/AC.51/1994/3 and Corr.1 and E/AC.51/1995/2), which it will be recalled focused on the start-up phase. The report presents findings and recommendations on translating the lessons of experience into practice; designation of responsibility centres; peace-building aspects of missions; learning from experience in the termination aspects of missions; successor arrangements; planning the termination phase; the liquidation of missions; the disposition of assets; and peace-keeping and other field activities in countries with continuing civil strife.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report was prepared in response to the recommendation made to the General Assembly by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) at the first part of its thirty-fourth session that the termination phase of peace-keeping operations be subject to in-depth evaluation in 1996. a/ Two prior reports on the start-up phase of peace-keeping (E/AC.51/1994/3 and Corr.1 and E/AC.51/1995/2) examined the extent to which the United Nations had been able to learn from its experience and to establish responsibility centres, policy and standard operating procedures for the major components of peace-keeping operations. A significant part of the present report is devoted to a review of compliance with relevant prior recommendations; proposals in it are designed to consolidate and build on prior decisions of the Committee concerning peace-keeping.

2. The present report is based on published United Nations documentation, including reports to the Security Council and the General Assembly, as well as resolutions of these bodies, reports of the Board of Auditors and relevant internal documents of the departments concerned, including end-of-mission assessments and "lessons learned" studies, audit reports and interviews with United Nations staff members involved with peace-keeping operations. External studies by national Governments, non-governmental organizations and individuals were also reviewed.

3. The termination issues examined were primarily those of missions that were successfully completed, although the last chapter examines some issues in the termination of problematic missions. Recent successfully completed missions include the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) and the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL); in the first case "despite serious difficulties, UNTAC was able to accomplish its central task of holding a free and fair election in Cambodia and laying a sound foundation for the people in Cambodia to build a stable and peaceful future" (S/26360, para. 30); the two other major missions "were steered to a commendably successful conclusion, both culminating in elections monitored by the United Nations and the establishment of elected Governments, with the promise of the consolidation of stability in both countries". b/

4. An international colloquium on post-conflict reconstruction strategies was held in Austria on 23 and 24 June 1995. It was attended by 58 participants from United Nations political, humanitarian and development units, specialized agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions, donor countries and non-governmental organizations, as well as representatives from war-torn societies. A follow-up meeting is planned for later in 1996. Similarly, the Inter-Agency Working Group on the Role of the United Nations System in Post-Conflict Situations, established by the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ), has been addressing the need for a post-conflict recovery strategy and framework and is preparing a compendium of United Nations system capacities to respond to post-conflict recovery requirements. The conclusions and recommendations of these meetings have been kept in mind when formulating the recommendations of this report. The General Assembly's Informal Open-ended

Working Group on An Agenda for Peace is currently discussing issues related to some topics examined in this report.

Recommendation 1, Coordination with related activities: The present report and the conclusions and recommendations of CPC on it should be submitted for their consideration to the General Assembly's Informal Open-ended Working Group on An Agenda for Peace, the General Assembly Informal Open-ended Working Group on An Agenda for Development and the Inter-Agency Working Group on the Role of the United Nations System in Post-Conflict Situations.

II. CAPACITY FOR LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE IN PEACE-KEEPING

A. Implementation of prior recommendations

5. A Lessons Learned Unit was established in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations in April 1995 in response to recommendations 1 to 4 of the progress report on the in-depth evaluation of peace-keeping: start-up phase (E/AC.51/1994/3, paras. 8-10), and recommendation 1 of the final report on the in-depth evaluation of peace-keeping operations: start-up phase (E/AC.51/1995/2, paras. 16-18). The Unit consists of two Professional posts and one General Service post. The Unit is still in the process of building up its files of existing documentation. It is also commissioning new studies and "lessons learned" workshops.

Table 1. Status of end-of-mission and related assessments as of 31 December 1995

Mission	End-of-mission assessment	Lessons learned workshop	Related United Nations assessments
United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG)	Draft for all components	No	
UNTAC	Draft for most components	Yes	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
United Nations Operation in Somalia (ONUMOZ)	Military, civilian police and support functions	Yes	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
UNOSOM	Support functions	Yes; comprehensive report issued	

6. A detailed review of the status of implementation of the recommendations aimed at developing at Headquarters a ready capacity to backstop substantive components, set out in 1994 in the progress report on the evaluation of the start-up phase, shows that, broadly speaking, there has been a considerable effort made over the past year or so. The translation of lessons learned into policies, standard operating procedures, guidelines, handbooks and training manuals has now begun but is still in its early stages.

7. The most progress over the last year has been in the civilian police function. The draft of a field handbook is now in circulation. The draft handbook has chapters with norms for standard civilian police (CIVPOL) duties, and other chapters on liaison, negotiation and mediation, communications, safety, first aid and administrative and logistic matters. The draft handbook contains sample forms for patrol reports, incident reports and so on, and annexes on standard guidelines for United Nations civilian police, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and United Nations Criminal Justice Standards for Peace-keeping Police. In addition, the curriculum of a training course for United Nations civilian police is in a preliminary draft, with segments on codes of conduct, communications and other matters and field simulation exercises using United Nations operating techniques.

Table 2. Status of ready capacity to act for major substantive components of peace-keeping missions

Major component	Does adequate responsibility centre exist?		Do doctrines (that is, internationally agreed principles of action) exist?		Do standard operating procedures exist?		Is operationality adequate?	
	March 1994	Dec. 1995	March 1994	Dec. 1995	March 1994	Dec. 1995	March 1994	Dec. 1995
Information	No	Some progress	No	No change	No	Some progress	No	Some progress
Electoral	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	In draft	In draft	Adequate	Adequate
Repatriation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Adequate	Adequate
Human rights	No	No	Some	No change	No	No change	No	No change
Civilian police	No	Considerable progress	Some	Considerable progress	In draft	Advanced draft	No	Considerable progress
Military	Yes	Yes	Some	No change	Yes	Yes	Stand-by arrangements initiated in 1993 continue to be developed	

B. What prerequisites to learning from experience remain?

8. Learning from experience requires the intellectual work of making assessments, but it also requires that this intellectual understanding be translated into policies, standard operating procedures, guidelines and manuals that reflect the lessons learned. The mere existence of an end-of-mission assessment document, however thoughtful, is not sufficient to guarantee that any

lesson will be learned by the United Nations as an institution. For this to happen, new policies and procedures must either be derived from the conclusions and recommendations of the assessments, or existing policies and procedures must be modified. The creation of a Lessons Learned Unit in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations is a first step along the road to institutional arrangements in the United Nations that will permit it to make efficient use in new missions of the lessons of past experience.

9. Some of the frustration and inefficiency imposed on field operations by the lack of standard operating procedures and policies derived from experience are vividly described in the end-of-mission assessment report on ONUMOZ:

> "In spite of various efforts made on the part of the ONUMOZ staff, they were unable to obtain any reference documents from United Nations Headquarters or other missions with regard to procedures applied in other peace-keeping missions on such important issues as demobilization, cease-fire monitoring, storage and safe-keeping of arms, investigations into violations of the agreement etc. Although one should expect the United Nations to have gained experience over the many years of peace-keeping, ONUMOZ staff had to create all rules applied for the implementation of key elements of its mandate in a complete vacuum. Months of negotiations with the parties were necessary to hammer out these essential operational tools. None of the staff members had any practical or legal experience in such matters as establishing rules for demobilization or investigations into cease-fire violations. It would have saved the mission a lot of time, money and headaches had samples from other missions existed, which could have been adapted to the Mozambican context. It is deemed invaluable that a centralized archive for such purposes is established at United Nations Headquarters."

The ONUMOZ assessment report annexed a great deal of material, which it pointed out "could be of use for any mission that is mandated with overseeing the separation, concentration and demobilization of former warring factions".

10. It is clear that a basic documentation centre that can provide field offices with such material at their request and assist those charged with starting up a new mission is not yet in place. A recommendation on this issue was contained in the end-of-mission assessment of ONUMOZ. The progress report (E/AC.51/1994/3, para. 10) had noted the absence of such a documentation centre, and in recommendation 4 had proposed that the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, in consultation with the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, should establish one.

> Recommendation 2, Headquarters documentation services: The documentation Centre proposed in recommendation four of the Progress Report (E/AC.51/1994/3) should be established, and should inform all missions of its holdings and the hard copy and electronic services it is in a position to provide, by 30 September 1996. The holdings should be indexed (with the assistance of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library) at the level of detail needed to be useful to missions. Whenever possible, an on-line computer link should be established with headquarters, so that field offices can access information from other peace-keeping missions directly

11. At its thirty-fifth session, CPC "recognized the importance of information in peace-keeping operations and recommended that the Secretary-General take all necessary measures to provide adequate support to that area". c/ Subsequently, the Secretary-General designated the Department of Public Information as the responsibility centre for backstopping the information component. The Department of Public Information has established an interdepartmental working group on media strategies for peace-keeping and other field operations, and the Peace and Security Section has been designated as the Department of Public Information focal point for coordination and as the secretariat of the working group, which has adopted a set of guidelines for field operations. These institutional arrangements draw on a wide range of resources but do not assign any individual full time to the backstopping of the information components of field operations. The Office of Internal Oversight Services will keep under review the effectiveness with which the functions listed in annex II of the progress report (E/AC.51/1994/3) are carried out for the information component through these arrangements, and will report on them to CPC at its thirty-seventh session as part of the triennial review referred to in recommendation 5 below.

12. Despite the expected decline in resources for peace-keeping operations, it is vital that the lessons of experience contained in end-of-mission assessments and lessons learned reports be institutionalized in the form of policies, guidelines, handbooks and manuals covering the main tasks of multi-component missions. It would be an extraordinary waste of many hundreds of millions of dollars worth of experience in tasks of continuing significance, such as the demobilization of warring factions, if the additional work needed to translate this experience into guides to practice was not undertaken.

Recommendation 3, Translating the lessons of experience into practice: For each of the major substantive tasks of multi-component peace-keeping missions the Lessons Learned Unit and the responsibility centre associated with the component or task should:

(a) Review the relevant parts of end-of-mission assessments and lessons learned documents and related materials, in consultation with the appropriate organizations of the United Nations system, and derive policies and procedures from them or modify existing policies and procedures;

(b) Issue the results of this process by June 1997;

(c) If necessary, seek secondment of staff from national Governments, particularly staff who have field experience in missions, to supplement the regular budget resources that can be devoted to these tasks.

Recommendation 4, Designation of responsibility centres: The Secretary-General should designate appropriate responsibility centres, with the functions listed in annex II of the progress report (E/AC.51/1994/3) for work on demobilization, resettlement and reintegration of uprooted populations and any other major substantive tasks of multi-component peace-keeping missions for which such centres have not yet been designated.

Recommendation 5. Triennial review of the in-depth evaluation of the start-up phase of peace-keeping operations: The triennial review, to be submitted to CPC at its thirty-seventh session, should consist of an assessment of implementation of the recommendations in the progress report (E/AC.51/1994/3), the related recommendations in the final report (E/AC.51/1995/2) and the present report.

III. LESSONS OF SUCCESSFULLY TERMINATED MISSIONS

A. Peace-building during the mission

13. In section VI of "An Agenda for Peace", the Secretary-General stated, in relation to peace-building activities, that "only sustained, cooperative work to deal with underlying economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems can place an achieved peace on a durable foundation" (A/47/277, para. 57). Post-conflict peace-building should not start after a peace-keeping mission is completed but preferably while the mission is in progress. The peace-keeping operation will often, and perhaps usually, be the largest concentration of external assistance a country will receive from the international community. For the operation to be a durable success it must leave behind a situation that has enough stability for peaceful reconstruction and development to continue, with the assistance of development agencies and other forms of international aid. It is therefore highly desirable for the mission to accomplish its goals in a manner that, to the extent possible, reinforces the peace-building process. Three recent successful missions, UNTAC, ONUMOZ and ONUSAL, all contained significant peace-building elements.

14. In Cambodia, UNTAC was officially designated as a "transitional authority"; the operations "went well beyond either conflict resolution or the provision of humanitarian aid; rather, UNTAC sought actively to support Cambodia's social, political and economic institutions". d/ There was "widespread rebuilding of roads, bridges and other infrastructural installations by UNTAC military engineers" (S/26360, para. 22). Both the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank participated in the preparatory mission of November 1991, and in the follow-up economics mission of March 1992; subsequently IMF fielded missions and in collaboration with UNDP rehabilitated the banking, monetary, fiscal and statistics systems. UNTAC staff maintained close contact with these missions. From these working arrangements there emerged a common analysis of the economic situation in Cambodia and of the nature of the necessary remedial steps.

15. In Mozambique, the mandate of ONUMOZ required it, inter alia, to monitor a comprehensive disarmament and demobilization programme and coordinate and monitor humanitarian assistance operations throughout the country, as well as provide assistance and verification for national elections. The Mission undertook the disarming of and demobilization of some 80,000 combatants and facilitated their return to civilian life; coordinated a humanitarian relief effort during which some 4 million refugees and displaced persons returned to their homes. The Mission helped to reduce the level of distrust between two former foes and establish the institutional framework for a democratic process, including the mobilization of resources that enabled the Resistência Nacional Moçambicena (RENAMO) and new political groupings to organize themselves as

parties and contest the elections in an effective manner". e/ A UNDP/Department for Development Support and Management Services project provided technical assistance on the preparation and organization of the elections; ONUMOZ itself aimed at assuring an independent and impartial monitoring of electoral processes. A small technical assistance project, initially composed of only five experts, grew into UNDP's biggest programme in Mozambique, eventually supporting more than 50,000 national electoral officers, and providing a great part of the material and logistic arrangements for the elections.

16. In El Salvador, ONUSAL commenced with a mandate to verify the compliance by the parties with the Agreement on Human Rights signed at San José. Subsequent agreements required the expansion of the mandate of ONUSAL to include the dismantling of the military structure of the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) and the reintegration of its members into civilian life, and United Nations verification of these activities. This was to be followed by the reduction of the El Salvadoran armed forces, the abolition of the treasury police and the National Guard and the creation of an impartial ad hoc commission to evaluate the professional competence of more than 2,000 officers (S/23402, annex, paras. 64-66). The Security Council mandate to ONUSAL in resolution 729 (1992) of 14 January 1992 included "the verification and monitoring of ... the Agreement on the Establishment of a National Civil Police". In a report on all aspects of ONUSAL, the Secretary-General informed the Council of his proposal on land transfers to a maximum of 47,500 people, including ex-combatants of both sides "which by virtue of its acceptance by the two parties ... in effect constitutes an addendum to the Peace Agreement" (S/25812, para. 56).

17. The following are illustrations of conclusions and recommendations in end-of-mission and lessons learned and related assessments that refer to peace-building activities during the mission:

(a) To achieve the ultimate goal of facilitating the successful reintegration of all returnees, a memorandum of understanding was signed with UNDP in January 1992 subsequent to which UNDP/United Nations Office for Project Services established the Cambodian Resettlement and Reintegration Programme. A Joint Technical Management Unit was created in Phnom Penh to review and approve quick impact projects designed to give communities with large returnee concentrations a "jump start" on the way to a more sustained level of development. UNHCR funded and supervised the implementation of some 80 quick impact projects with a total amount of $9.5 million. Some 60 international and local non-governmental organizations as well as other United Nations agencies (UNDP, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) and intergovernmental organizations implemented this programme (UNTAC lessons learned report);

(b) With the experience gained in the joint UNHCR/UNDP quick impact programme in Cambodia, UNHCR and other aid agencies have suggested that similar rehabilitation activities are an essential consolidating ingredient in the early stages of implementing a comprehensive peace settlement, especially in countries affected by protracted warfare (report and recommendations of IPS/United Nations

Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), International Conference on the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia: debriefing and lessons, March 1995);

(c) The United Nations agencies "stressed a long-term educational approach" in the demobilization process while "the peace-keeping personnel had to focus on the smooth conduct of the demobilization". These conflicting views of the United Nations agencies and ONUMOZ produced "tensions in the culture of development versus peace-keeping" (ONUMOZ workshop);

(d) An integral part of any United Nations peace-keeping mission, should be the promotion of "indirect peace-building", i.e., support for the revival of associational life. The resurrection of a web of civic, professional, business, athletic and other associations is a major component of the reconciliation process in war-torn societies. Civil society is the backbone of a sustainable political system (Somalia assessment);

(e) When peace-keeping operations go hand in hand with peace-building efforts, the operation is likely to be more acceptable to the local population. A lack of funds for peace-building in Rwanda went a long way to undercut the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) (Somalia report);

(f) For the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to be effective, he needs to be provided with his own discretionary funds for peace-building. In the ONUMOZ mission, for example, the authority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General was enhanced because he controlled a trust fund (Somalia report).

18. For the next programming cycle, the Executive Board of UNDP has, by decision 95/23, earmarked 5 per cent of core resources for development in countries in special situations. The report of the Administrator elaborating on the framework for the next cycle (DP/1995/15), in describing this facility, refers in paragraph 41 to "timely post-conflict peace-building" and notes in paragraph 45 that UNDP is well-placed to cooperate with other involved departments, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system to formulate programmes and projects for rehabilitation including reintegration of displaced populations, demobilization, de-mining, reconstruction of infrastructure, rebuilding governance. UNDP intends to utilize these resources in a catalytic manner to mobilize complementary financial and in-kind resources and pre-investment initiatives in cooperation with the World Bank and within a strategic framework that takes account of macro-economic concerns.

Recommendation 6. Peace-building aspects of missions:

(a) Peace-building should be an integral part of a mission's strategy. The role of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General should include establishing overall policy to guide peace-building activities. Special resources, additional to those provided by United Nations system funds, programmes and agencies, should be mobilized for programming and implementation by operational agencies of the system;

(b) Multi-component peace-keeping missions should, as a general rule, be accompanied by parallel peace-building projects coordinated by the UNDP Resident Coordinator under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General;

(c) Active coordination with UNDP and international financial institutions should be initiated early in the planning process by those responsible for a multi-component peace-keeping mission. Survey teams and those involved in the initial planning for the mission should include staff familiar with those institutions;

(d) The Special Coordinator for Economic and Social Development, supported by the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, Department of Political Affairs, Department of Humanitarian Affairs, UNHCR and UNDP, should develop policy guidelines for Resident Coordinators on peace-building aspects of missions, covering such issues as projects on capacity-building relevant to the mandated tasks, reintegrating uprooted populations (including returning refugees, internally displaced persons and demobilized combatants), mine clearance and mechanisms for the mobilization of resources to be deployed by operational agencies.

Recommendation 7. Learning from experience in peace-building aspects of missions:

(a) All end-of-mission and lessons learned assessments should review peace-building activities during the mission, and the institutional arrangements for these activities;

(b) The Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, the UNDP Office of Evaluation and Strategic Planning and the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs should collaborate on all assessments of multi-component peace-keeping missions with UNDP and Department of Humanitarian Affairs involvement.

B. A protracted termination phase

19. Termination has not proved to be a simple process even for successful missions; the mandated tasks were various, and were not completed simultaneously. Ad hoc extensions and additions to the mandate have been common in recently completed missions as part of the effort to establish conditions for durable success.

20. The mandate for ONUMOZ was extended several times. The Security Council in resolution 797 (1992) of 16 December 1992 decided to establish for a period until 31 October 1993 the ONUMOZ in order to accomplish the objectives described in the report of the Secretary-General (S/24635 and Corr.1). In resolution 916 (1994) of 5 May 1994 the Council decided to renew the operation for a final period until 15 November 1994 but again extended the operation by resolution 957 (1994) of 15 November 1994 until the new Government of Mozambique took office - but not later than 15 December 1994, and authorized a limited number of civilian logisticians, specialists staff officers and a small detachment of

infantry, to complete its residual operations prior to its withdrawal on or before 31 January 1995. An international workshop on ONUMOZ concluded that, in spite of this protracted termination process and the mission's overall success, it had been a mistake not to have a follow-up for ONUMOZ so that the gains from the United Nations investment would not be endangered afterwards.

21. In El Salvador, the United Nations continued to have verification responsibilities after the election. The cessation of armed conflict and the formation and deployment of a new National Civil Police proceeded at a pace slower than envisioned in the peace process as did the phasing out of the national police. Programmes for the reintegration of ex-combatants from FMLN and the armed forces of El Salvador continued to encounter difficulties. f/ In a joint declaration issued on 4 October 1994 the Government and FMLN reaffirmed their commitment to the Peace Accords and to that end decided to establish a joint mechanism with the participation of ONUSAL (S/1994/1144, annex). The Secretary-General citing this invitation recommended the extension of ONUSAL until April 1995 (S/1994/1212). In its resolution 961 (1994) of 23 November 1994, the Council extended the end date of the mandate of ONUSAL for a final period of five months starting 1 December 1994.

22. The following illustrations, drawn from end-of-mission and lessons learned and related assessments, refer to the transitional phase:

(a) In UNTAC, most of the electoral staff departed once the results of the elections were endorsed by the Security Council as free and fair. However, the Director of the Electoral Component and his immediate staff remained for a short time to assist the Constituent Assembly as required with advice about constitutional and related matters;

(b) Cooperation between the Bretton Woods institutions and UNTAC was one of the signal characteristics of the mission, the importance of which cannot be overestimated. Although neither institution succeeded in restoring normal relations with Cambodia before the elections, their activities during this period allowed them to become operational very quickly after the elections, thereby assisting greatly in the transition from UNTAC to the post-UNTAC period;

(c) The anticipated departure of ONUSAL demonstrated the importance of the work of permanent national bodies such as the Office of the National Counsel for the Defence of Human Rights and non-governmental human rights organizations for the protection and promotion of human rights. It was to be hoped that the Office of the National Counsel would be able to assume the task of active verification fully when ONUSAL terminated its activities (A/49/281-S/1994/886, annex, para. 132);

(d) In Mozambique, "the verification of weapons and ammunition was not finalized by ONUMOZ, the result being that 'there is a lot of lethal material still hidden away, which for obvious reason is not conducive to the promotion of law and order or reconciliation'. This was demonstrated by the rise in crime in Mozambique ... A mechanism should be created which links the progress of demobilizing soldiers with strict controls on lethal war material" (international workshop on the successful conclusion of ONUMOZ, March 1995).

23. In the supplement to An Agenda for Peace, the Secretary-General stated that:

> "The timing and modalities of the departure of the peace-keeping operation and the transfer of its peace-building functions to others must therefore be carefully managed in the fullest possible consultation with the Government concerned. The latter's wishes must be paramount; but the United Nations, having invested much effort in helping to end the conflict, can legitimately express views and offer advice about actions the Government could take to reduce the danger of losing what has been achieved. The timing and modalities also need to take into account any residual verification for which the United Nations remains responsible." g/

> Conclusion: Protracted Termination Phase: Ad hoc extensions of parts of the mandate, or additions to it for specific tasks needed to establish the conditions for durable success, are to be expected during the termination phase of missions.

> Recommendation 8, Learning from experience in the termination aspects of missions: All end-of-mission and lessons learned assessments should review activities during the termination phase of a mission aimed at establishing proper conditions for the transfer of responsibility to successor arrangements. An attempt should be made to draw lessons concerning the nature of conditions that would make durable success likely and so reduce the danger of losing what had been achieved.

C. Successor arrangements

24. Continuity in the international community's assistance activities is required; the understanding of the needs of the country, further enhanced during the mission's activities, must not be lost when the mission terminates and successor arrangements are established.

25. Activities carried out by the United Nations in Cambodia after the departure of UNTAC included rehabilitation, mine clearance, and the reintegration of refugees and displaced persons. In addition, article 17 of the Paris Agreements provided that, after the end of the transitional period, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights should continue to monitor closely the human rights situation in Cambodia, including, if necessary, by the appointment of a Special Rapporteur who would report his findings annually to the Commission and the General Assembly (S/26360, para. 27). A Special Rapporteur was appointed by the Commission in its resolution 1993/6 (see A/50/681). The Centre for Human Rights established an operational presence in Cambodia on 1 October 1993. Activities of the Centre for Human Rights in Cambodia include assistance in legislative reform, the development and strengthening of national institutions, and the administration of justice (see A/50/681/Add.1).

26. In his report before the expiry of the final mandate of ONUSAL, the Secretary-General informed the Council that "a number of commitments remain still to be fulfilled before the Salvadorian peace can be pronounced a

success. ... These commitments pertain to aspects of the peace accords ... which ... will call into question the irreversibility of the peace process as a whole as long as they are unfulfilled. Indeed, some of them are potentially explosive and need to be defused urgently" (S/1995/220, para. 68). The Secretary-General informed the Council that he intended to leave behind a small team that would conduct the remaining verification and good-offices responsibilities of the United Nations (ibid, para. 70). On 28 April 1995, the Council, in resolution 991 (1995), formally terminated the operation but also welcomed the arrangements proposed by the Secretary-General (S/1995/144) on the establishment of a United Nations Mission in El Salvador (MINUSAL). On 1 May 1995, the Secretary-General established the Trust Fund for MINUSAL in order to support the mission activities (A/50/517, para. 3). The programme of work of the Mission comprises six areas (public security, land transfer, human settlements, reinsertion programmes, the Fund for the Protection of the Wounded and Disabled, and legislative reforms) (ibid., para. 4).

27. The ONUMOZ end-of-mission assessment contained proposals for follow-up activities after the mission was terminated. The proposals in the ONUMOZ assessment concerning electoral and civic education activities included:

(a) Immediate activities (time-frame: two to three months) aimed at ensuring the preservation of the material and non-material assets acquired throughout the electoral process and to ensure that preparations begin immediately to create the necessary conditions for holding local elections in 1996:

(i) Conclusion of the inventory and collection of all the material assets acquired for the election process and final decisions as to their destination, so as to ensure their immediate conservation and their availability for the local elections;

(ii) Conclusion of the collection, organization and systematization of the informational patrimony obtained during the registration in such a way that they can be reused in the near future;

(iii) Continued coordination with and mobilization of the donor community to obtain technical and financial support for the new electoral process;

(b) Other proposals involved medium-term activities, such as the continuation of civic education activities.

Recommendation 9. Project proposals for successor arrangements: Enhanced joint planning with the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator should ensure that assistance activities initiated during the mission are appropriately maintained by the United Nations system within the framework of operational activities for development. It should be standard practice for end-of-mission assessments to include, for each component, proposals to enhance the strategic framework for national and international action, developed in full collaboration with the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator. This strategic framework, including proposals for appropriate programmes for implementation under the successor arrangements,

would be revised accordingly with the participation of national authorities and United Nations system organizations and agencies.

Recommendation 10, Learning from experience in the transfer of responsibility to successor arrangements: As a matter of standard procedure, the Lessons Learned Unit of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, in cooperation with the relevant institutions, should, within one year of the termination of a mission, review experience with the transfer of responsibility to successor arrangements.

Recommendation 11, Inter-agency policy on successor arrangements:

(a) On the basis of the information currently available, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs and the Special Coordinator for Economic and Social Development, with the support of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, UNHCR and UNDP, should: (i) analyse the functions which multi-component peace-keeping operations perform recurrently; (ii) identify those organizations of the United Nations system that should take over those mandated functions still required after the peace-keeping operation is terminated; and (iii) develop policy guidelines on the manner in which the transition should be planned and executed;

(b) These draft proposals should be submitted to the appropriate ACC machinery for review and adoption as a system-wide policy on successor arrangements.

D. Planning the termination phase

28. Planning for the termination phase is "usually in greater detail than for the deployment phase" (United Nations Logistics Working Group - Recommendations and products, United Nations, Field Administration and Logistics Division/ Department of Peace-keeping Operations). Responsibility for phasing out personnel, both military and civilian, is shared between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General who is the head of the mission and the Personnel Management and Support Service, Field Administration and Logistics Division/Department of Peace-keeping Operations). The phasing out modality is contained in a report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council outlining withdrawal plans which take into account security and logistics considerations. Standard operating procedures exist for repatriating military and national civilian personnel and for the return of United Nations staff members to their releasing departments/agencies. There is relatively little on the planning of the termination phase in the end-of-mission reports and related assessments. The foreword to the comprehensive report on the lessons learned from UNOSOM states that the withdrawal from Somalia was conducted in an exemplary way and can be considered an organizational masterpiece. However, there appeared to be no extensive assessment report on this success.

Recommendation 12, Learning from experience in the planning of termination: All end-of-mission and lessons learned assessments should include reviews of experience with the planning of the termination phase.

Recommendation 13, Responsibility for the termination phase: Assignments of responsibility to those in charge of components of a peace-keeping mission should include the transfer of responsibility to successor arrangements, contributions to lessons learned and end-of-mission assessments, and the formulation of proposals for adjustments to policies and procedures based on the lessons learned.

E. Liquidation of missions

29. The primary responsibility for the liquidation of missions rests with the Field Administration and Logistics Division. This includes providing liquidation guidelines to closing missions; ensuring those guidelines are adhered to by the mission; providing clarification and guidance on procedures to be followed; reviewing the field accounts in conjunction with Accounts Division; and finally, preparing and submitting the reports pertaining to the final financial performance and disposal of assets to the Controller.

30. The Audit and Management Consulting Division of the Office for Internal Oversight Services has audited the liquidation of several large peace-keeping missions including UNTAC, UNOSOM II and most recently the United Nations Peace Forces. The audits focused on high risk areas including the settlement of accounts, property and inventory controls, planning and logistics for withdrawing personnel and equipment, and transportation issues. In accordance with standard procedures, the organizational entities concerned had an opportunity to comment on the audit findings. In general, they concurred with OIOS recommendations and agreed to take necessary remedial action.

31. The Office for Internal Oversight Services is providing continuing audit coverage for the liquidation of UNPF, the restructuring of United Nations peace operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the implementation of the new United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES). The Office for Internal Oversight Services will also closely monitor the Department of Peace-keeping Operations plans and preparations for the impending liquidations of UNAMIR and UNMIH and will intensify its field audits of these missions as the liquidations progress.

32. End-of-mission and lessons learned assessments of UNTAC and ONUMOZ contained conclusions very similar to the findings of the Office for Internal Oversight Services audits and investigations. The ONUMOZ end-of-mission report identified several problems associated with the security of the operation's assets, and made some recommendations which are reflected in those below.

33. Guidelines for planning the liquidation of field missions are available in draft and incorporate lessons learned from the liquidation of UNOSOM and ONUMOZ. Comments on earlier draft guidelines, dated 25 October 1994, included these points among others:

(a) The liquidation processes of missions such as UNTAG, the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG), the United Nations Office of the Secretary-General in Iran and more recently UNTAC and the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) revealed time and time again that the number and volume of the residual tasks associated with the closing of a mission and the time-frame required to conduct their execution in a proper manner are usually underestimated significantly. In order to keep the liquidation period and the size of the liquidation team to the necessary minimum, and thus contain costs, it is crucial that a more methodical and coordinated approach be taken when planning the closure of a field mission;

(b) The typical tasks associated with the liquidation of a field mission, should be grouped by the respective responsibility centre. Under these headings the tasks should either be listed in the order of their respective importance or by sequential order. Critical path activities should be clearly identified as such.

Recommendation 14. Liquidation of missions:

(a) End-of-mission and lessons learned assessments and audit and investigation reports should, where their findings point to problems of a general nature, propose suitable modifications to the provisional guidelines on the liquidation of missions;

(b) A critical path analysis undertaken for the liquidation process and incorporated in the guidelines should be introduced into the field mission planning process. Software for the application of such an analysis should be made available to each mission and the appropriate training conducted;

(c) Arrangements should be made where needed for troop-contributing Governments to provide some military personnel to assist in securing the assets of the mission. The terms of reference of the civilian police component assigned to a mission should include the investigations of incidents involving United Nations personnel and thefts of United Nations property.

F. Disposition of assets

34. Current policy on the disposition of assets is that when liquidating a mission, its equipment and other property shall be disposed of in the manner indicated below:

(a) Equipment in good condition that conforms to established standardization or is considered compatible with existing equipment will be redeployed to other United Nations operations or will be placed in reserve in the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi t form the start-up kits for future use;

(b) Serviceable equipment not required by other peace-keeping missions that might be of use to other United Nations agencies, international

organizations or non-governmental organizations in the area of operation and that is not feasible to keep in reserve, may be sold to a relevant agency or organization in accordance with applicable United Nations procedures;

(c) Any equipment or property no longer required or not feasible to dispose of in the manner described in subparagraphs (a) and (b) above, or which is in poor condition, will be subject to commercial disposal within the country, following standard United Nations regulations and procedures and national regulations;

(d) Any mission surplus assets remaining after disposition under the terms referred to under subparagraphs (a) to (c) above, and/or any assets that have already been installed in the country and that, if dismantled, would set back the rehabilitation process of the country, may be residual for contribution to the duly recognized Government of the respective country. This refers, in particular, to airfield installations and related equipment bridges, wells and related water supply installations, permanent buildings and mine-clearing equipment.

35. The provision in subparagraph 34 (d) appears consistent with peace-building efforts that are so important for the durable success of a mission. However, there are two considerations that indicate this policy is too constricted:

(a) Audits have found that some of the equipment stored at Brindisi was not in good enough condition to be worth the costs of transportation and storage;

(b) The new Governments of devastated States, such as Rwanda, desperately need mission equipment, such as vehicles and computers, often to simply maintain civilian police and other functions carried out by the mission.

These considerations indicate that greater flexibility than the above policy appears to permit may be advisable to allow the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the senior officials in charge of the liquidation of the mission to evoke the provision in subparagraph 34 (d). Care must be taken to avoid a conception of efficiency that is so narrow it undermines the conditions for the durability of the success of a mission.

Recommendation 15, Policy on disposition of assets during the liquidation of the mission:

(a) The existing policy on the disposition of assets during the liquidation of a mission after a peaceful transfer of power to duly constituted government should be reviewed by the end of 1996 in the light of recent experience on the costs and benefits of shipment of equipment through Brindisi, and the continuing peace-building requirements of the new situation created by the mission;

(b) Subsequent to this review, detailed guidelines for working out a cost-benefit analysis of transfer of assets should be drafted, as recommended by the Board of Auditors in its liquidation audit of CNUMOZ.

IV. SOME TERMINATION ISSUES IN PROBLEMATIC MISSIONS

36. UNAVEM II, UNMIH and UNOSOM II were suspended or terminated before completion of their objectives. In the case of Angola, the operations were suspended following the collapse of the election process and subsequent outbreak of violence. The Security Council however, renewed the mandate of a United Nations good-offices mission and reauthorized the peace-keeping mission as UNAVEM III following the successful conclusion of a new accord mediated through the United Nations good-offices mission. In Haiti, an advance team deployed in September-October 1993 was withdrawn when the bulk of UNMIH observers was prevented from deployment. In response, the Security Council in resolution 940 (1994) of 31 July 1994, authorized Member States to form a multinational force to restore the legitimate Government by all necessary means. The multinational force was deployed in September 1994. Following the restoration of the legitimate Government of Haiti, an enlarged UNMIH was restarted. The United Nations operations in Somalia experienced protracted difficulties and was finally terminated in March 1995, two years after it was started. The Secretary-General established a small office at Nairobi to monitor developments in Somalia. UNDP also continues to maintain at Nairobi, the office of its Resident Coordinator for Somalia and a United Nations development office established, in 1994, to coordinate the planning of rehabilitation assistance to Somalia during the operation and once a Government has been established.

37. The Department of Peace-keeping Operations plans to complete end-of-mission reports on UNMIH as well as UNAMIR and UNPROFOR and a mid-mission assessment of UNAVEM III in 1996. General lessons on the termination of problematic missions must await the completion of these reports. Where peace enforcement is conducted through multinational task forces outside the command and control of the United Nations, the omission of analysis of such experience would limit the value of lessons learned studies.

38. The Department of Peace-keeping Operations has organized, in cooperation with external organizations, three seminars assessing the lessons learned from the United Nations operations in Somalia. Illustrations of some of the conclusions and lessons pertaining to UNOSOM follow:

(a) Initial planning should presuppose nothing. In the case of UNOSOM I, it was assumed that peace-keepers were the right tool for the task. It was never asked whether the involvement of the military in a humanitarian assistance programme could be counter-productive to the long-term humanitarian strategy (comprehensive report on lessons learned from UNOSOM);

(b) In collapsed States, there usually exist "conflict constituencies" with a vested interest in continued instability, communal tension and an economy of plunder. An incremental approach to this dilemma could aim at transforming the interests of these elements, which necessitates adequate resources to fund demobilization, training and income-generating activities for ex-militiamen (comprehensive report on lessons from UNOSOM);

(c) There is wide agreement that it was a mistake in Somalia for a Chapter VII operation (UNITAF) to co-exist with a Chapter VI operation (UNOSOM I). This lesson was well applied in Haiti, where a multinational force

with Chapter VII powers was phased out before a Chapter VI operation, UNMIH, was deployed (comprehensive report on the lessons learned from UNOSOM).

Recommendation 16, Peace-keeping and other field activities in countries with continuing civil strife: On the basis of a paper drawing on the end-of-mission reports for UNOSOM, UNAVEM III, UNMIH, UNAMIR and UNPROFOR, and other relevant assessments of field experience, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, in cooperation with the Department for Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP and the World Bank, should convene an expert group meeting in 1997 to draft guidelines for field operations in countries experiencing continuing civil strife.

Notes

a/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/49/16), part one, para. 34.

b/ Ibid., Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/50/1), para. 598.

c/ Ibid., Supplement No. 16 (A/50/16), para. 256.

d/ The United Nations and Cambodia, 1991-1995, The United Nations Blue Books Series, vol. II (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.I.9), para. 135.

e/ The United Nations and Mozambique, 1992-1995, The United Nations Blue Books Series, vol. V (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.I.20) paras. 237-241.

f/ The United Nations and El Salvador, 1990-1995, The United Nations Blue Books Series, vol. IV (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.I.12), para. 169.

g/ A/50/60, para. 52.

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Thirty-sixth session
3-28 June 1996
Item 4 (d) of the provisional agenda

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: EVALUATION

Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-second session on the evaluation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Note by the Secretary-General

In conformity with paragraph 5 (e) (i) of General Assembly resolution 48/218 B of 29 July 1994, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the "Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-second session on the evaluation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees", dated 20 March 1996. The report has been reviewed by the relevant departments and offices.

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[20 March 1996]

ANNEX

Triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its thirty-second session on the evaluation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) at its twenty-second session to review the implementation of its recommendations three years after taking decisions on an in-depth evaluation.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has made a concerted effort to follow through on the recommendations of CPC. Progress is reported on new approaches to international protection and the search for durable solutions, external relations strategies, budgetary questions and emergency response capacity. In regard to some recommendations such as those relating to non-governmental organizations, progress has been somewhat mixed. In a few instances, because of external circumstances, there is little progress to report or a different approach has been taken to that recommended.

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I INTRODUCTION

1. At its thirty-third session, the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) reviewed the report of the Secretary-General on the in-depth evaluation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (E/AC.51/1993/2). Being in general agreement with the main thrust of the report, namely, to strengthen the functions of protection and search for durable solutions and to delegate further operational responsibility for assistance and, bearing in mind the necessity that UNHCR should function within its mandate, the Committee endorsed the report and its recommendations. 1/

2. The Committee decided that the report and the section of the CPC report dealing with it should be transmitted to the Executive Committee of UNHCR for its consideration and action. In 1993, at its forty-fourth session, the Executive Committee reviewed the recommendations of the in-depth evaluation and requested the High Commissioner to keep the Subcommittee of the Whole on International Protection and the Subcommittee on Administrative and Financial Matters informed of the progress in the implementation of the recommendations. 2/ The High Commissioner has kept the two Subcommittees regularly informed of the progress in the implementation of the recommendations; and an overview of UNHCR efforts in this regard was presented to the Executive Committee, at its forty-sixth session, in 1995. The presentation of the present report follows the breakdown by subcommittees. In section II, the report reviews the implementation of recommendations that relate primarily to international protection - questions considered at the Subcommittee of the Whole on International Protection; and section III addresses recommendations on programmatic, administrative and financial matters - questions mainly considered at the Subcommittee on Administrative and Financial Matters.

3. The present triennial review, conducted to determine the extent to which CPC recommendations on in-depth evaluations had been implemented, has been greatly facilitated by the comprehensive monitoring done at UNHCR. As was the case with past triennial reviews, the present report is based on a review of the relevant documentation, information submitted by the units concerned and interviews for clarification and verification purposes.

II. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

A. Internally displaced persons

Recommendation 1, Population displacements not covered by international instruments: In situations of displacements of populations not covered by international instruments, UNHCR should have an advisory role for protection issues with the organizations involved in operations of relief and assistance. In such situations, when prompt and adequate assistance is not provided by any other international organization, UNHCR should seek the necessary authority to provide the protection and assistance needed. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 12)

4. The current policy vis-à-vis internally displaced persons should be seen in the context of the arrangements in the United Nations system for coordination of humanitarian activities; it is set out in General Assembly resolution 49/169 of 23 December 1994. The High Commissioner's inter-office/field office memorandum of 28 April 1993 on "UNHCR's role with internally displaced persons" is consistent with recent conclusions of the Executive Committee of UNHCR and with General Assembly resolutions, and it continues to provide the basic framework for UNHCR action. On criteria for involvement, the memorandum makes a distinction between situations of internal displacement presenting a clear link with activities that UNHCR undertakes in fulfilment of its mandate and situations where the link with mandated activities is not present. The former situations include assisting internally displaced populations mixed with returnee populations, or preventing the risk of cross-border spilling of the internal displacement. In the latter situations, UNHCR may consider getting involved to attenuate the causes of internal displacement. In both cases, UNHCR's activities would normally be supplementary to overall political and/or humanitarian efforts of the United Nations.

5. The question of the internally displaced continues to be considered in a range of forums: the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs; the Commission on Human Rights; and the Executive Committee of UNHCR. In recent years, UNHCR involvement in population displacements not covered by international instruments has taken place within an inter-agency framework, as in Tajikistan and Rwanda. For UNHCR, an important aspect in the United Nations inter-agency consultation concerning internally displaced persons is to assign the responsibility for their protection, where necessary. The Inter-Agency Task Force on Internally Displaced Persons, established in 1993, focused first on clarifying concepts. The Task Force now reviews potential or actual situations of displacement, and it seeks to reach consensus on the most appropriate division of labour.

B. Early warning

6. Recommendation 2 of the in-depth evaluation focused on UNHCR's role in drawing attention to potential displacements of populations. This recommendation is also related to the subject of early warning, an issue taken up in greater detail in recommendation 8.

> Recommendation 2, Catalytic political role of UNHCR: Working in cooperation with the political authorities of the United Nations and the Emergency Relief Coordinator, UNHCR should bring to the attention of the relevant intergovernmental bodies information on situations which could give rise to displacement of populations. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 14)

> Recommendation 8, UNHCR focal point on early warning: UNHCR should establish a focal point exclusively in charge of research on early warning questions, including the development of indicators of impending displacements of population, with access to all existing information within UNHCR. The focal point should develop guidelines for UNHCR staff on gathering and reporting relevant information. The UNHCR focal point should coordinate its activities with the focal points of other United Nations

departments and agencies within the framework proposed by the Organizational Committee of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). In this context, UNHCR will actively participate, alongside other concerned organizations of the United Nations system, with the newly instituted consultations mechanism on early warning on flow of information on mass movement of populations, under the aegis of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 26)

7. UNHCR currently participates in initiatives within the United Nations system to establish an early warning system that will provide the humanitarian agencies with information regarding the potential for flows of refugees and displaced persons. These efforts are being coordinated by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. The UNHCR focal point on early-warning matters is the Chief of the Centre for Documentation on Refugees, who represents UNHCR in United Nations system-wide deliberations. Within UNHCR, the Centre, which was established some 10 years ago, acts as the information resource arm of the Office. It provides users with a broad and relevant collection of refugee literature, and legal and country of origin information. This information, now available over the Internet, is also shared with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and its Humanitarian Early Warning System. In addition, UNHCR is actively participating in discussions in relation to another inter-agency database, namely, ReliefWeb. At present, there are gaps in the United Nations system-wide reporting to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs; information relevant to the concerns of UNHCR from countries where the Office is not present may not be conveyed to the Emergency Relief Coordinator. There is as yet no single coherent international mechanism for information collection, verification and exchange.

8. The UNHCR programme of database creation and development was, for some years, focused on the areas of refugee law and literature. More recently, it has begun to concentrate on the situation in the countries of origin of refugees and on root causes. With respect to sources of information, UNHCR is using publicly available material. Such material, provided it is gathered and used on the basis of coherent standards, has the advantage of being open to review and verification. Although the Office has regular internal reporting channels, it is not principally an information-gathering, reporting or monitoring agency. UNHCR's initiatives relate specifically to the needs of the Office, in the light of its statutory obligations.

9. In establishing early warning and early response mechanisms, UNHCR has to address ways in which to link operational information from field offices to policy planning. With this in mind, the Centre for Documentation on Refugees, in January 1996, was relocated within the Office of the Assistant High Commissioner in charge of policy planning and operations. The challenge, on the information management side, is to ensure that those who need "early warning" receive what they need to take informed decisions for early actions. Further dissemination and sharing of such information with others is important. Since 1992, UNHCR has used the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Emergency Relief Coordinator in the Department of Humanitarian Affairs to bring situations to the attention of intergovernmental bodies; more involvement of other departments, such as the Department of Political Affairs, is needed to reach the decision makers.

C. Human rights

10. Recommendation 3 recognizes that human rights violations are a factor in many coerced departures and addresses the question of the need for greater linkages between UNHCR and the human rights initiatives and mechanisms of the United Nations system. The recommendation states:

> Recommendation 3, Human rights aspects of refugee situations: UNHCR and the Centre on Human Rights should establish joint mechanisms to ensure that: (a) refugee situations emanating from human rights violations are brought to the attention of the Commission on Human Rights, and appropriate action is proposed to it; and (b) advisory services and technical cooperation aimed at improving the implementation of international covenants and agreements on human rights, including monitoring and reporting mechanisms, adequately address the human rights of refugees and asylum-seekers. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 15)

11. Collaboration with the human rights initiatives and mechanisms of the United Nations system is an increasingly important aspect of UNHCR international protection activities, especially its preventive and solution oriented efforts. UNHCR participates in the regular inter-agency meetings convened by the Centre for Human Rights. In 1994, UNHCR stated that, in addition, the Office hoped "to finalize a memorandum of understanding, which would cover many of the elements referred to in the in-depth evaluation and its recommendations, with the Centre. This memorandum would include provisions for collaboration in staff training, the participation of resource persons from UNHCR, the Centre, and other organizations in seminars and educational activities, and increased consultations regarding the preparation and dissemination of human rights materials" (EC/1994/SCP/CRP.4, para. 20). The memorandum of understanding has not yet been finalized. On 8 March 1995, the Commission on Human Rights adopted resolution 1995/88 on human rights and mass exoduses, in which, inter alia, it invited all human rights mechanisms of the United Nations to seek information and report on problems in mass exoduses of populations or in their voluntary return home. It also requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to pay attention to situations that cause or threaten to cause mass displacements and to address effectively such situations through emergency preparedness and response mechanisms.

12. UNHCR continues to seek to strengthen its cooperation with the human rights bodies of the United Nations. UNHCR attends meetings of the Human Rights Committee in an observer capacity and follows the work of other treaty bodies, notably the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee against Torture. UNHCR collaborated closely with the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, resulting in extensive coverage of the situation of refugee women in her first report to the Committee on Human Rights. UNHCR, in the light of its own experience of introducing gender guidelines into its programmes, is actively assisting the Centre for Human Rights in its own work on the gender aspects of human rights.

D. Promotion of refugee law

13. Pointing to the mandated responsibility of UNHCR to consolidate and expand the legal framework governing the status and rights of refugees, the evaluation took up the issue of integrating promotion of refugee law into UNHCR country programmes.

> Recommendation 18, Refugee law at the country level: Activities on refugee law promotion should be included in UNHCR country programmes. The implementation of these activities should be part of the function of field protection officers. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 38)

14. The Office organizes refugee law and protection courses for government officials and implementing partners and other non-governmental organizations. A number of training activities have been organized jointly with regional bodies, other international organizations and non-governmental partners. UNHCR is gradually developing a network of regional coordinators for refugee law (promotion and training) in selected field offices as part of its promotional endeavours.

15. Since 1993, the implementation of training programmes has been uneven. The programmes are well developed in a number of countries while in others they lack continuity. As a consequence of the staff rotation policy, there are cases of long periods of vacancy between two protection officers, and working relations with local partners are difficult to maintain. Also, UNHCR presence in a country is by definition temporary; building networks of interested partners that would have the needed expertise would provide a more stable base for the promotion of refugee law. Noting that UNHCR has too few protection officers with legal backgrounds to cover all situations that present difficult protection problems, the in-depth evaluation emphasized the importance of collaboration with academic institutions.

> Recommendation 19, Collaboration with academic institutions: UNHCR should designate a focal point/research manager to facilitate collaboration with academic and research institutions for purposes of enhancing the promotion of refugee law and the dissemination of the fundamental principles of refugee protection. A world survey of research and academic institutions and organizations in areas of interest to refugee issues should be conducted, perhaps by an academic centre in collaboration with UNHCR. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 39)

16. Through a project completed in 1995 involving the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London, UNHCR has established a pilot network of 20 higher education institutions in Africa and Asia and is supporting their efforts to initiate or develop teaching and related research in refugee law and/or other areas of refugee studies, such as international relations, anthropology, sociology and development. A crucial challenge within this strategy will be to broaden the support base for these institutions by involving institutions in the North that have developed refugee expertise.

17. In the latter part of 1994, UNHCR, with the financial support of the Ford Foundation, commissioned a study to look at the Office's research needs and

strategies, and to propose means of improving organizational research management; this project was related to the ongoing efforts of UNHCR to enhance its policy-making capacity. As part of the project, a preliminary database of research contacts was established in the Centre for Documentation for Refugees. The study observed that UNHCR had no central research section, and no organization-wide research committee that could define a common agenda. For research, the Office had to rely heavily on external resources; that required careful management to develop a constructive dialogue between practitioners and academics that could further critical knowledge about refugees. In 1995, at its forty-sixth session, the Executive Committee called "upon the High Commissioner to explore ways to integrate its activities in the areas of documentation, research, publications and electronic dissemination". 3/

III. PROGRAMMATIC, ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. Regional approaches

Recommendation 4, Regional approaches to durable solutions: UNHCR should encourage all countries involved to explore regional approaches to durable solutions of problems causing refugee situations. Such approaches would normally involve some or all of the following elements: the legal mechanism of tripartite commissions; plans containing commitments related to basic principles of refugee law and humanitarian assistance; close collaboration between UNHCR, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other development agencies in the context of a joint support unit; and the eventual withdrawal of UNHCR from any operational responsibility. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 16)

18. The subject of comprehensive and regional approaches to refugee problems was considered in depth by the Subcommittee of the Whole on International Protection in May 1994. Among the examples of comprehensive approaches considered were: the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA), the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees, Cambodia, the former Yugoslavia and Mozambique. In the course of 1994, UNHCR launched a process to develop a comprehensive approach to the problems of refugees, returnees, displaced persons and migrants in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and relevant neighbouring States.

19. UNHCR no longer has any operational responsibilities in the CIREFCA process. In Tajikistan, the hand-over of certain UNHCR responsibilities to other agencies, after a year of negotiation, took place in late 1995. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) took over material assistance and social reintegration functions. In Mozambique, it was only late in the UNHCR reintegration operation that it proved possible to develop concrete links with other programmes.

20. In 1995, a joint UNDP/UNHCR review of CIREFCA entitled "CIREFCA: An Opportunity and Challenge for Inter-Agency Cooperation" examined a number of issues of relevance to inter-agency cooperation. This study observed that "effective cooperation should build on complementarity in types of activity, modes of operation and length of commitment with roles, responsibilities and

comparative advantages identified at an early stage of an operation", with a word of caution against "measures which may diffuse the specific mandates and competencies of agencies, experience from CIREFCA and others have rejected a linear conceptual approach to the continuum from relief to development". The study suggested that UNDP and UNHCR together with other agencies should agree on a coherent policy and strategic approach in operations where humanitarian, developmental and political issues are interdependent; and that UNHCR should make use of the proposed strategy for an early planning of a smooth phasing out of humanitarian activities. "CIREFCA and other more recent post-conflict situations raise the fundamental question of the relevance of a clear-cut distinction between funding for emergency relief and development when the two problems converge"; it is also suggested that an intermediate category be introduced for "post-conflict recovery". In order to include development agencies in the continuum from emergency relief to development, joint ventures are under way with United Nations agencies and the World Bank.

B. Inter-agency cooperation

Recommendation 5, Cooperative arrangements in assistance to refugees: The present effort to clarify areas of specialization and complementarity among agencies of the United Nations system and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), leading to cooperative arrangements along the lines of the UNHCR-World Food Programme (WFP) agreement, should be continued. Cooperative arrangements should be put into effect as soon as possible with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (water supply, sanitation), the World Health Organization (WHO) (coordination of health sector in large programmes), and IOM (logistics, support to reinsertion, information in country of origin). (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 18).

21. In November 1993, UNHCR completed an evaluation of the status of current cooperative relations with the various United Nations agencies. UNHCR continues to develop action oriented agreements with sister agencies. In mid-1995, a memorandum of understanding was signed with UNFPA. Negotiations with UNICEF have been concluded and a memorandum of understanding was signed in mid-March 1996. Regular discussions take place with IOM on a range of operational questions.

C. Non-governmental organizations

22. The important role of non-governmental organizations as implementing partners of UNHCR is the subject of a further recommendation.

Recommendation 6, Role of non-governmental organizations: The UNHCR electronic directory (roster) of non-governmental organizations active in refugee matters should be completed as a matter of priority, and regularly updated. This database should include an assessment of each non-governmental organization's capacity and prior performance. UNHCR should formalize agreements with suitable non-governmental organizations in the areas of legal support, advocacy, and refugee rights monitoring; such

agreements should include a clear definition of responsibilities and roles. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 19)

23. An electronic directory has been established and is regularly updated. The Office is taking steps to assure a more professional relationship with non-governmental organizations; however, it does not believe that it is appropriate that the directory, open to public access, should include an assessment of non-governmental organizations' capacity and performance. A database recording the emergency stand-by capacity of some 30 non-governmental organizations became operational in March 1996. However, it is not for public access and it contains judgements of capacity rather than performance.

24. To streamline and decentralize its operations, UNHCR is giving more responsibilities to its field representatives. These representatives select implementing partners; they have been provided with a set of criteria to take into consideration for the selection of partners and with instructions to strengthen managerial control of these partners. Information on implementing partners available at or researched by headquarters units is useful to field representatives to apply criteria such as previous ability demonstrated by the prospective partner to deliver the assistance needed. It should be noted that recommendation 6 of the in-depth evaluation addresses aspects of the electronic roster that are to be used by UNHCR for the management of operations. The Office of Internal Oversight Services believes that information on the capacity and performance of implementing partners needs to be analysed and stored centrally for easy consultation by UNHCR staff; this can be built into the more formalized evaluation system for non-governmental organizations and other operational partners considered by UNHCR.

25. In 1995, at its forty-sixth session, the Executive Committee expressed serious concern about the observations of the Board of Auditors, in particular those relating to continuing problems in regard to the lack of adequate managerial control by UNHCR of programmes implemented by its partners. 4/ On the Board observations, UNHCR commented that the Office made every effort to select implementing partners who met the exacting criteria contained in UNHCR manuals; very often, however, UNHCR had little choice in the more remote field locations (A/50/704, annex, para. 10). The subject of non-governmental organizations has been scheduled for extensive consideration by the Standing Committee of UNHCR in the course of 1996.

26. As part of its efforts to enhance its partnership with non-governmental organizations, UNHCR, early 1993, initiated the comprehensive Partnership in Action (PARINAC) process, designed to facilitate closer collaboration between UNHCR and non-governmental organizations. The 1994 Oslo Plan of Action represents the synthesis of proposals that had emerged during the PARINAC consultation process (see A/AC.96/832). The Plan of Action stressed that transparency and accountability remained the underlying principles of the non-governmental organization-UNHCR partnership, which called for close UNHCR-non-governmental organization communication and coordination of actions, and recommended, in particular, that UNHCR should help provide non-governmental organizations with appropriate training, financing, institution-building and transfer of skills in view of its demands for a more efficient and effective performance of its partners. To assist in the implementation of the

recommendations in the Plan of Action, UNHCR has appointed focal points in the regional bureaux, responsible for operational relations with non-governmental organizations, and non-governmental organization focal points in most offices in the field. In order to further the partnership with non-governmental organizations in the implementation of assistance projects, non-governmental organizations have been involved in discussions leading to the formulation of country operation plans in the various UNHCR field offices. Partnership in the implementation of assistance projects entails non-governmental organization resource contributions to the various projects.

D. Programming and administrative controls

Recommendation 7, Strengthening field audit and management: The Internal Audit Division should be strengthened in order to allow the audit of each UNHCR country programme every other year, or at the assumption of duties of a new representative. UNHCR should establish a multidisciplinary team of management specialists; this team should visit field programmes to provide assistance for the strengthening of management systems in place, to advise on the quality of the leadership and management of human resources, and to assist staff in ensuring that the programme objectives are being met. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 21)

27. An annual audit plan is prepared by the Audit and Management Consultancy Division in consultation with UNHCR. The section of the Division dedicated to the internal audit of UNHCR has been strengthened; the posts of this section are funded by UNHCR. In 1995, 21 UNHCR country programmes were audited and in 1996 a minimum of 27 programmes will be reviewed by auditors. However, additional posts would be needed to achieve the target in recommendation 7.

28. Within the broad objective of strengthening UNHCR's management capacity, the Executive Committee, at its forty-fifth session, approved the creation of the post of Director of the Inspection and Evaluation Service for UNHCR. This Service, which incorporated an already existing Central Evaluation Section, became operational in March 1995.

29. A number of initiatives aimed at improving the quality of UNHCR programmes have been taken. In April 1993, the High Commissioner established a Working Group on Programme Management and Operational Capacity. The Working Group found that budgetary and financial controls measured effectiveness by the extent to which funds had been spent, with insufficient attention to the usefulness of the assistance provided.

30. The Working Group recommended increased decentralization, recognizing that there was a need to ensure that field offices had the capacity to manage their programmes and control resources effectively; broader delegation to the field required a corresponding increase in the accountability of representatives. Follow-up to the findings of the Working Group is under the responsibility of a Steering Committee, chaired by the Deputy High Commissioner, established on 5 October 1994. Attention is now being given to the rationalization and simplification of administrative processes. UNHCR is also strengthening its cadre of administrative and finance officers for field duties, and exploring

ways to provide more support to field staff by increasing electronic access to administrative information and guidelines. Among other measures to enhance efficient programming by field offices, UNHCR is developing workload indicators for determining staffing requirements.

E. Emergency preparedness and response

Recommendation 9, Emergency operations: In each emergency situation, one senior administrative officer with full authority to commit resources should be appointed to provide administrative support in the field to the Emergency Preparedness and Response Officer. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 28)

Recommendation 10, Funding of the Emergency Preparedness and Response system: The Emergency Preparedness and Response System (EPR) put into place in 1992 should be funded by Governments at the requested levels to enable UNHCR to conduct proper responses to emergencies. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 28)

Recommendation 11, Stand-by arrangements: Stand-by arrangements similar to those with the Norwegian and Danish Refugee Councils should be developed at the regional level with national relief organizations. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 29)

31. With the establishment in 1994 of an administrative support capacity in the Emergency Preparedness and Response Section of UNHCR, it has been possible to ensure that personnel trained in all aspects of administration are included in the emergency teams. With regard to administrative support, the administrative officer or the head of the emergency response team receives limited authority to enter into commitments from the country representative or chief of mission, in countries where there is already a UNHCR presence, or, where this is not the case, from headquarters.

32. The staff costs of emergency response are now covered under UNHCR general programmes. Operations are charged initially to the Emergency Fund; on receipt of funds, in response to a given special appeal, the Emergency Fund is reimbursed.

33. The question of expanding stand-by arrangements at the regional level with national relief organizations has been studied. There are various limitations to the number of stand-by arrangements UNHCR can enter into: the Office does not want to underutilize those it already has; moreover, there are costs involved in setting up and maintaining any stand-by arrangement. After a review of the cost-effectiveness of having such arrangements in every region, it was decided to foster cooperation with national relief organizations at the regional level in other ways, such as the provision of regional emergency training and contingency planning to non-governmental organization partners, government partners and UNHCR staff.

F. Training

34. In 1992, the High Commissioner established a Task Force on Training to study ways in which training could more effectively assist UNHCR in carrying out its mission. The UNHCR Task Force report and its recommendations were reviewed by the Senior Management Committee of UNHCR in June 1993 and broadly endorsed. Most of the recommendations have now been incorporated in the UNHCR career management strategy. The strategy integrates staff appraisal and staff development systems, and establishes a framework to support both individual and organizational career planning. The strategy was formulated in 1994; its testing phase ended early 1996. The Staff Development Section of the UNHCR Division of Human Resources Management centrally coordinates staff training. As part of the career management strategy project, in particular in order to facilitate staff development, UNHCR budgets for training are to be decentralized to field offices.

> Recommendation 15, Training of UNHCR staff: All new staff members should be given appropriate induction/orientation training and briefing, with priority to those being assigned to the field. Similarly, all staff members assigned to new functions should receive appropriate training prior to assuming their new functions. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 35)
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> Recommendation 16, Strengthening the UNHCR training functions: A training steering committee should be established under the chairmanship of the Deputy High Commissioner to develop UNHCR policy on training and to monitor its implementation. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 36)
>
> Recommendation 17, Information for training management and monitoring: Information on training activities indicating the numbers of people trained, the nature of the training, and the affiliation and functions of the trainees, should be maintained regionally and centrally to ensure accountability and to meet proper management requirements. All training activities of UNHCR should be subjected to regular end-of-training evaluations. Follow-up evaluations, six months to one year after the training, should be conducted for samples of trainees and activities. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 37)

35. Although the number of training programmes has increased since 1993, not all priority training envisaged in recommendation 15 has been carried out. As part of the career management strategy, there are plans to provide, across the organization, essential training related to job functions. A Training Advisory Board bringing together heads of units at headquarters with key training responsibilities was constituted and met for the first time in October 1995. The Board will be responsible for defining an overall strategy on training and will recommend annual training priorities.

36. The Staff Development Section is responsible for maintaining organizational statistics on training. However, statistics on training are still not maintained accurately; field offices do not report their training activities regularly to headquarters. One of the roles of the Section is also quality control; this role is discharged by both types of evaluations recommended by the in-depth evaluation. Field training coordinators are responsible for the

implementation of the yearly training plan at their field office; however, when coordinators are transferred during the course of a calendar year and not replaced, the training plan may not be implemented. Another consequence of the rotation policy is that the skills and expertise of training coordinators are not always utilized as they may be transferred to posts that do not include a training function.

> Recommendation 12, Collaboration in training: UNHCR should collaborate more extensively with non-governmental organizations, including academic centres specialized in refugee matters, in designing, implementing and funding its training activities. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 33)

> Recommendation 13, Training of national operational partners: UNHCR should support an increase in formal training of national operational partners by implementing partners with extensive experience and sufficient expertise. This support could be partly through an on-the-job training format, and partly through using training kits prepared by UNHCR. Such enhanced training activities, complemented by collaboration between implementing partners during project implementation, would contribute to building up the institutional capacity of the host country. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 33)

> Recommendation 14, Cooperation with United Nations agencies in training: Cooperation between UNHCR and other agencies in the field of training, ranging from exchange of information and comparing experiences to undertaking joint training efforts, should continue to be developed informally, particularly in view of increased inter-agency operational collaboration. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 34)

37. UNHCR acknowledges that, to tap the experience and skills of other organizations in particular areas, existing cooperation of UNHCR with others in the area of training will need to be expanded. A few organizations have training activities on subjects of relevance to the UNHCR mandate, sometimes using training materials prepared by UNHCR; however, there is no information on the scope of training carried out by these organizations. The use of experienced implementing partners themselves to help train national non-governmental organizations in a given country is, to date, not widespread. In recent years, this approach has been developed mostly in relation to the UNHCR gender training programme, "People-oriented planning".

38. Within the United Nations system, UNHCR participates in the work of several groups where joint training initiatives are agreed upon. UNHCR participates in the seminars organized at the International Labour Organization (ILO) Centre at Turin for senior United Nations field representatives. A joint UNHCR/WFP training programme is being developed from the currently independent training programmes of both agencies. Another training programme involving inter-agency cooperation is that on security awareness, which has been developed by UNHCR in close consultation with the United Nations Security Coordinator.

G. Public information

Recommendation 20, Distribution Unit: UNHCR should establish a unit with responsibility to distribute and, where appropriate, merchandise all dissemination products and publications, to coordinate activities of outside contractors concerned, and to collect fees and contributions generated by the products and publications. The unit can be started by regrouping existing resources at present scattered among several sections. Any additional resources required by substantial new activities should be supported from revenues. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 42)

39. A fully-computerized Distribution Unit is now functioning in the Public Information Section of the Office and is responsible for the distribution of publications and marketing of public information products. Revenues generated by public information sales since 1 January 1994, are being used to support new activities. However, the Distribution Unit does not distribute materials produced in other sections of the Office as recommended.

Recommendation 21, Response to media: At headquarters, UNHCR should adopt a more streamlined procedure for internal clearance of public information materials and develop and maintain a separate database for electronic fact sheets, with on-line access provided for accredited media correspondents, as well as UNHCR staff who must respond to media inquiries. In the field, in the absence of public information officers and of UNHCR staff representatives, UNHCR staff should be encouraged to play a public information role when the need arises, under general guidelines established by headquarters. A brief segment of training courses for UNHCR staff should be devoted to responding to the media. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 46)

40. Arrangements have been made through the Division of External Relations for the prompt clearance of all press releases; these arrangements have considerably streamlined the clearance process. Electronic fact sheets on major operations of UNHCR are now available over the local area network (LAN) computer system to all staff members at headquarters and to some in the field. Field staff not yet served by the LAN receive the fact sheets on a regular basis via telex. These fact sheets are also available through the Internet.

41. Public information training tools are now in all branch offices. These provide detailed guidelines on dealing with the press. New UNHCR staff members are offered training sessions with public information and given this material. New public information guidelines were recently prepared (January 1995) for field offices.

Recommendation 22, Public information officers: Public information field personnel should work under the supervision of Public Information, Geneva, and within the framework of the UNHCR public information strategy. In duty stations where there is a pressing need for greater public awareness of refugee issues or potential for fund-raising, public information officers should be assigned in a manner that ensure the necessary continuity with the media. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 47)

Recommendation 23, Public awareness campaigns: UNHCR public awareness campaigns should be designed around local perceptions and carried out in close collaboration with local UNHCR staff, country/national committees or other local organizations as appropriate. (E/AC/51/1993/2, para. 49)

Recommendation 24, Collaboration with the Department of Public Information: Collaboration between UNHCR and the Department of Public Information should be developed further. For example, the Department of Public Information electronic communication link with United Nations information centres should be used systematically to disseminate the content of UNHCR weekly briefings; UNHCR should prepare presentations for the periodic briefings of United Nations information centre directors organized by the Department of Public Information, with sufficient advance notice being given by the Department of Public Information to UNHCR. A joint UNHCR/Department of Public Information task force should be set up to explore new avenues of cooperation, including the possibility of a common UNHCR/Department of Public information strategy. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 49)

42. UNHCR has established a network of public information officers, all experienced in working with the media. There are currently about 30 such officers in 25 field offices. The public information officers, while under the direct supervision of the various country representatives, are also responsible to the Chief of Public Information, Geneva.

43. Public awareness campaigns have recently been undertaken in some 15 countries, all adapted to local perceptions. The benefit of having National Committees to work with such campaigns has been recognized. Currently, such committees exist in the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Germany and Spain.

44. A liaison officer with a public information background was appointed to the UNHCR Liaison Office in New York in November 1993; a close working relationship exists between the Office of the Spokesman of the Secretary-General and UNHCR. Cooperation between the Department of Public Information and UNHCR has focused on the development of materials on specific themes.

H. General and special programmes

Recommendation 25, Coverage by the Pledging Conference: In order to permit a more comprehensive review by the Executive Committee and coverage by the Pledging Conference, the allocation of activities between the categories of general programmes and special programmes should be adjusted every three years by the Subcommittee on Administrative and Financial Matters to reflect significant changes in the strategic orientation of UNHCR. A much greater proportion of activities concerned with voluntary repatriation should come under the category of general programmes, in particular such aspects of repatriation as preparation, promotion and movement. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 55)

45. The relationship between general and special programmes has been, of late, the subject of extensive deliberations. There has been a continuing concern on

the part of some delegations as to the validity of the distinction between general and special programmes and the governance of the Executive Committee, particularly over special programmes. At the forty-fifth session of the Executive Committee, it was decided to undertake a review of a range of issues related to budgets, fund-raising, transparency and governance. 5/

46. Following informal consultations on budgetary questions and conclusions adopted by the Subcommittee on Administrative and Financial Matters in June 1995, the Executive Committee decided 6/ that:

(a) Any UNHCR budget structure should have as its objectives the following:

(i) Transparency, accountability and managerial control;

(ii) The necessary flexibility to address emergency situations and unexpected changes to programmes;

(iii) Assured funding of statutory activities;

(b) Further streamlining of the UNHCR budget structure should be undertaken bearing in mind the objectives set out above, so that in a single, coherent budget structure there is a clear indication of overall needs, as well as of needs at the country level, for other programmes and headquarters;

(c) The group of stabilized, statutory activities that constitute the general programmes should be a funding priority. A commitment to their full funding would be facilitated by a process of dialogue in which the High Commissioner explained the rationale used for the inclusion of the various activities within the annual programme component of the general programmes.

I. Fund-raising

Recommendation 26, External relations strategies for fund-raising: The role of the units in the External Relations Division should be reviewed so as to maximize their contributions to fund-raising activities. A strategy for the involvement of donors, and non-governmental organization and United Nations system partners, in needs assessment, the drafting of appeals, and in other ways, should be developed and become standard practice. Additional resources should be allocated to fund-raising activities. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 55)

47. At the end of 1993, there was a full review of the external relations policy of the Office, and the role and responsibilities of the Fund Raising Service and the other sections in the Division of External Relations. The Service now undertakes regular, internal strategic planning sessions which are closely followed up. Much of its planning looks at how to increase support from donors through closer relations and involvement of UNHCR, both at headquarters and in the field. As a part of this overall strategy, the Service undertakes regular projections of likely future funding to permit regular modifications of UNHCR's approach to donors.

48. The review of the UNHCR external relations policy also covered UNHCR links with non-governmental organizations and the rest of the United Nations system, and how better to bring their resources to bear, both directly and indirectly, on UNHCR operations. UNHCR and other United Nations agencies have also worked with the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs to address such issues as needs assessments and the preparation of consolidated appeals in complex emergencies.

J. Multi-year planning

> Recommendation 27, Selective multi-year project planning: In order to increase donor support for medium- and long-term programmes, UNHCR should adjust its programming practices to encourage multi-year project planning. For example, where regional plans of action include medium- and long-term activities, as in the Comprehensive Plan of Action, associated multi-year project plans should be developed. Field staff should be trained and given support to formulate such multi-year project plans. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 55)

49. The new emphasis on strategic planning that characterizes the report of the Working Group on Programme Management and Operational Capacity (see para. 29 above) will underline the important role that multi-year projects could have in achieving certain programme objectives. The report stated that regional package agreements, multi-year planning with solutions in view, and proactive cooperation with a greater range of partners were the approaches that should - and indeed did - lead to the determination of truly viable and durable solutions. Multi-year planning would not apply to emergency operations, but would be relevant in preventive activities as well as in some UNHCR assistance in institutional capacity-building. By adjusting its programming practices in those fields from short-term to medium-term, UNHCR would achieve a more integrated and complementary approach with developmental organizations. For example, in the CIS countries, UNHCR intends to establish four to five year programmes, jointly with IOM.

K. Administrative needs and costs

50. It will be recalled that article 20 of the statute of UNHCR states that no expenditure other than administrative expenditures relating to the functioning of the Office of the High Commissioner should be borne on the budget of the United Nations. Hence, in theory, the question of UNHCR administrative expenditure has important implications for the UNHCR share of United Nations regular budget funding. Recommendation 28 of the in-depth evaluation addressed the question of administrative needs and costs:

> Recommendation 28, Survey of growth in administrative needs and preparation of proposal for funding of administrative costs: UNHCR should, in the context of its classification of activities/categorization of posts, and in consultation with the Department of Administration and Management, undertake a study of its administrative needs. The study should show how the administrative needs of UNHCR have grown with the expansion of

> international protection and assistance activities in the past four years, and pinpoint administrative requirements which are of a recurring nature. The administrative needs demonstrated by the study should then be translated into post and/or administrative overhead requirements. The study and its conclusions should be presented to the General Assembly through the Executive Committee of UNHCR and the Economic and Social Council so that it could receive the priority attention needed. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 55)

51. In this context, section I, paragraph 36, of General Assembly resolution 48/228 A of 23 December 1993 should be recalled, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to review the existing arrangements for regular budget and extrabudgetary funding for UNHCR, taking fully into account the increased demand upon the Office since 1989, and if necessary to submit proposals to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session through the appropriate intergovernmental bodies.

52. UNHCR, after consultation with both the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Subcommittee on Administrative and Financial Matters, developed a methodology for the categorization of its posts. UNHCR posts have been divided between two broad categories, namely those related to programme delivery and administrative support. The two definitions of type of posts were applied to the UNHCR staffing table. These new staffing tables, as well as the related tables on staff and non-staff costs, were part of the documentation presented to the Executive Committee at its forty-fifth session.

L. Strategic planning

> Recommendation 29, Strategic planning: A small group should be established in UNHCR to make recommendations on strategic planning to the High Commissioner and the Senior Management Committee. The Subcommittee on Administrative and Financial Matters should be informed of decisions on the establishment of strategic planning in UNHCR by the end of 1993. These decisions should also be reflected in subsequent revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 56)

53. Effective 1 January 1996, the post of Assistant High Commissioner was established. The Assistant High Commissioner assists in the formulation of UNHCR policies, in initiating and developing strategies to facilitate the discharge of the High Commissioner's mandate, and in exercising oversight of the implementation of such strategies in the relevant organizational units in UNHCR.

54. In a related development, but also linked to the need of the Office to have access to informed, objective, strategic policy advice, the High Commissioner created an Informal Advisory Group, made up of 14 prominent experts. The Group is expected to provide the High Commissioner with a broad perspective on international trends, and potential causes and areas of conflict that might provoke population displacements or are critical in the search for solutions.

M. Staffing

Recommendation 30, Emergency staffing arrangements: In emergency situations, when all the capacity for redeployment of administrative staff within UNHCR has been exhausted, UNHCR should deploy staff on secondment from United Nations agencies, to assume administrative and managerial functions. Rosters of such agency staff should be developed by regions. Such secondment may require one week's training in refugee matters; this training should be made a prerequisite of placement on the roster. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 57)

55. UNHCR has established both internal and external stand-by arrangements to meet the need for emergency staffing. Among these arrangements is an internal reserve pool of seven administrative staff members who are on stand-by for deployment to emergency operations as a priority. Within the Division of Human Resources and Management, a Recruitment and Career Management Section was established in 1994 to provide staff in a timely manner to replace emergency teams, as well as to assure staffing for ongoing emergency operations (e.g., the former Yugoslavia) and special operations (e.g., Mozambique).

56. A very limited number of staff from other United Nations agencies have been seconded to UNHCR operations to perform administrative functions. Nevertheless, UNHCR, in its recruitment drives has made contacts with other United Nations agencies to identify as large a pool of potential recruits as possible. One important development is the use of staff seconded from Governments and non-governmental organizations. Such staff are brought under UNHCR jurisdiction as consultants without remuneration.

Recommendation 31, Recruitment: UNHCR should develop, preferably as part of a strategic planning document, a medium-term recruitment strategy that takes into account the scale and nature of its current and likely future responsibilities; this strategy should include systematic review of sources of suitable personnel and the building up of a roster of candidates available for recruitment. The Subcommittee on Administrative and Financial Matters should be informed of policy decisions concerning the recruitment strategy by the end of 1993. (E/AC.51/1993/2, para. 58)

57. Currently, a roster, mostly of applications sent to UNHCR, is maintained to fill vacancies through external recruitment. A few recruitment missions have been organized; more are planned to improve geographical representation and gender balance. The publicity in countries where these missions are taking place could have been more targeted to the sources of suitable personnel. What is being stressed in UNHCR recruitment efforts is the operationality of UNHCR and its increasing "front-line" role in conflict situations, which often means that UNHCR duty stations entail hardship conditions and separation from families. The Office is reviewing its recruitment strategy in the context of the career management strategy project (see para. 34 above). In this context, all aspects of internal placement and external recruitment are being reviewed jointly; in particular, improvements to the rotation system and to career planning are being sought.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/48/16), part I, paras. 24-29.

2/ Ibid., Supplement No. 12A (A/48/12/Add.1), para. 22.

3/ Ibid., Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 12A (A/50/12/Add.1, para. 19 (m).

4/ Ibid., para. 21 (h).

5/ Ibid., Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 12A (A/49/12/Add.1), para. 24.

6/ Ibid., Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 12A (A/50/12/Add.1), para. 22.